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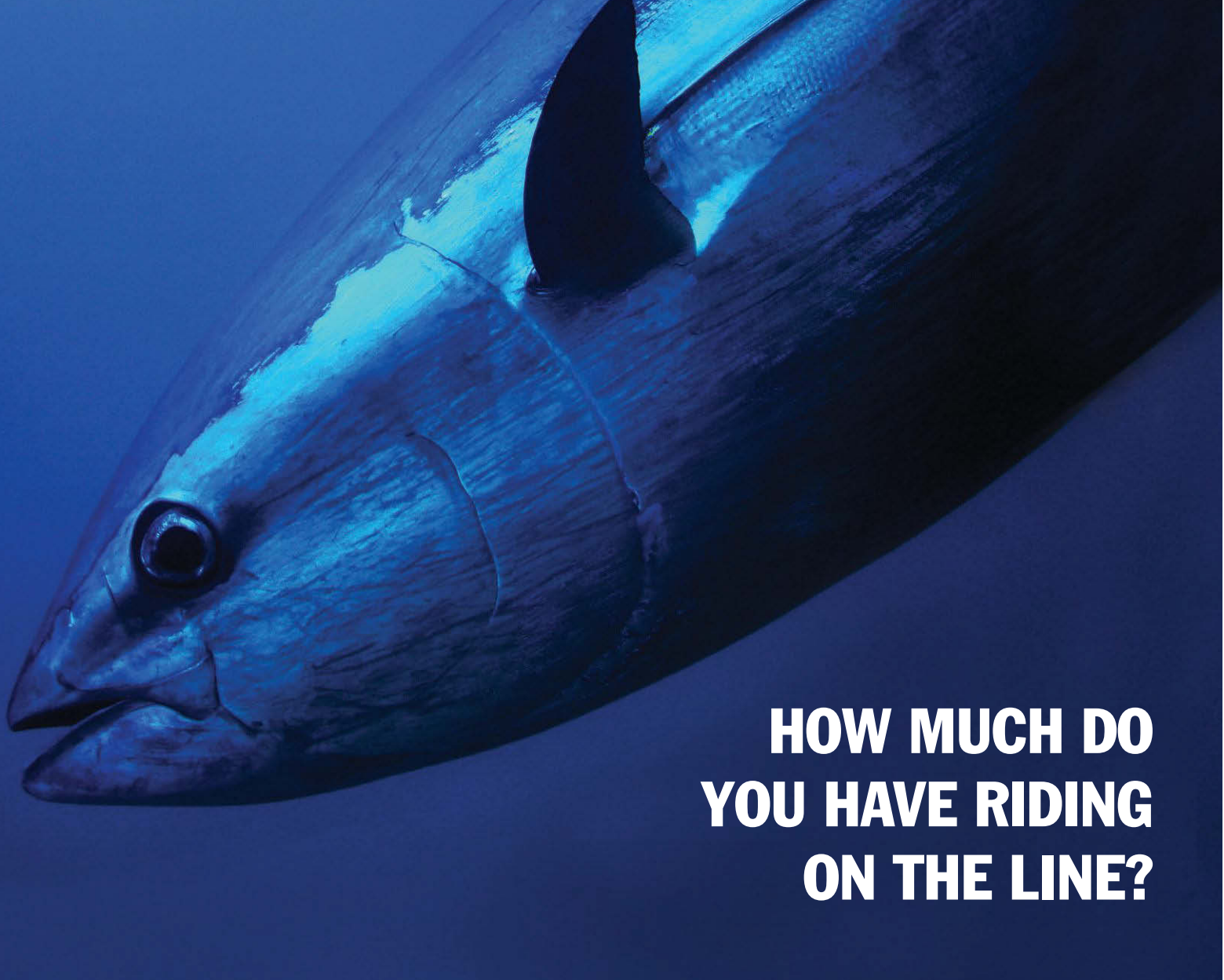
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A red hot summer of yellowtail angling has spoiled just about everyone, but you can keep the ball rolling by following some key steps, including preparing to fish areas where upwellings bring bait and predator fishing together.

34 DREAM TRIP ABOARD THE *INTREPID* | Jim Niemiec

One of the finest sportfishers in the fleet, *Intrepid* enjoyed a successful trip down the Mexican coastline and all the way to Alijos Rocks. Find out why trips aboard this 116-foot luxury ship are in such high demand.

48 ABOARD A LONG RANGER: WHAT TO EXPECT | Bill Roecker

Expect adventure, fun and opportunities to catch amazing gamefish far from home. Also take a look at the tackle, techniques and possibilities that give you the best chance to have a successful trip.

60 HOOP IT UP! | Capt. Bob Woodard

Spiny lobster fishing has found an ever greater audience as the local, tasty "bugs" open their season on Oct. 3. You'll find more recreationalists along with commercials vying for them, so learn the tricks to get your share.



ON THE COVER

Wahoo are invading local waters, this nice one was taken aboard a long range vessel in waters where they normally live!

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Cover design by HEATHER SWAIM

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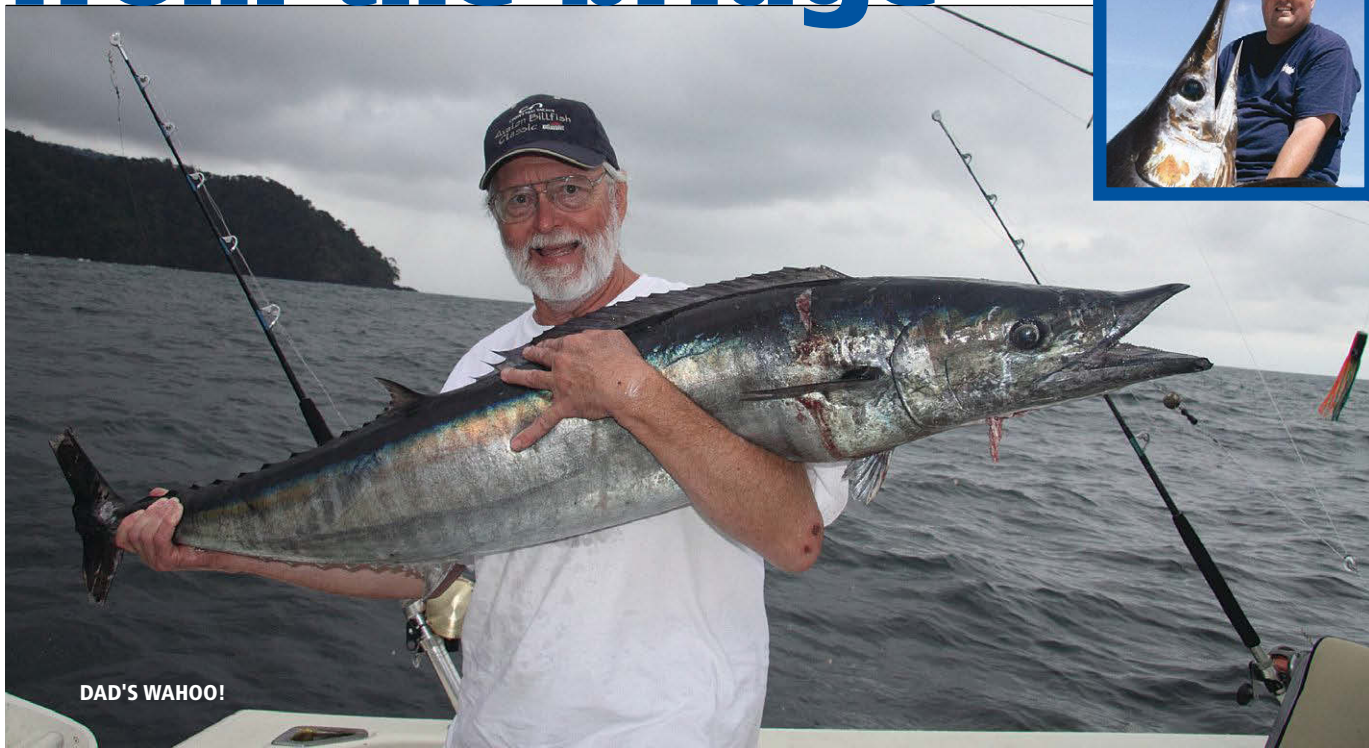
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from the bridge

BY BILL DEPRIEST

PUBLISHER/
EDITOR



Wahooooo

So the first wahoo are starting to be caught in our local waters. A Marauder (or similar style bait) seems to be a part of every sportboat's spread while trolling the tuna grounds. A few boats are having a shot a day, which is incredible considering we are in Southern California not Cabo San Lucas. The chances of catching a wahoo up here this year are as good as they will ever get!

Just as I am writing this, the *Helena* out of Dana Wharf had to get out of the harbor due to the threat of a tsunami from the large earthquake down in Chile. They headed out and put some diving plugs in the water and caught a pair of wahoo in the morning and lost a third. That is crazy!

Likewise, Bill Seiler went out and caught himself one this morning. The great part about the bite this year is that these are really nice fish. His went 58.4 pounds.

I have fished wahoo in a few different locations around the world and it's funny that almost every place you target them, they are an inshore, deep-structure fish. So when we fish them in Panama, we are very close to

shore—like a stone's throw away (in green water, by the way).

When you troll them in Hawaii, it's inshore, off some structure. In Mexico, the same seems to be the status quo. Wahoo are considered an inshore fish most places south of the border. Even when we fished them in Australia, they were tight to the reef. On Hurricane Bank, it's the same deal.

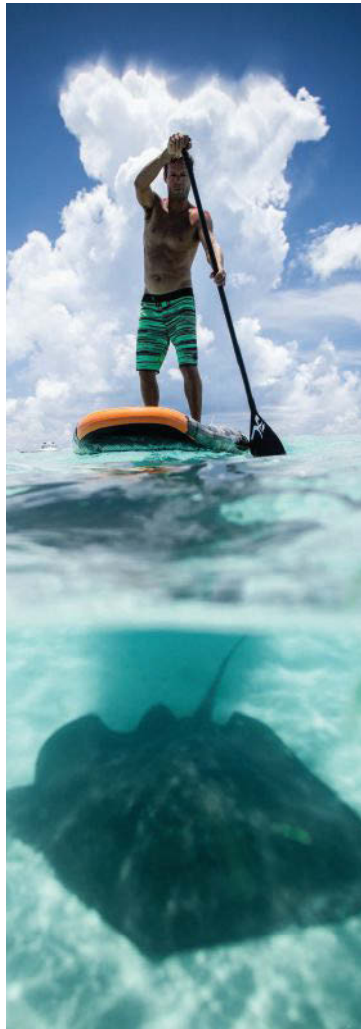
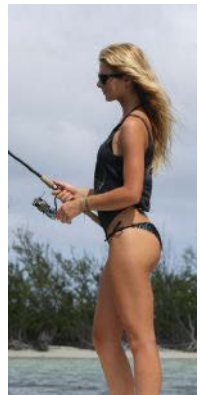
Once the fish get above Mag Bay, they seem to be offshore on floating structure. They are generally seen on kelps up this way, but remember last year? Wahoo stacked up somewhat inshore, off the hard bottom above Oceanside. The 300-foot (or so) hard bottom structure held them and for a week or two, and the guys were able to

get a few. We need to remember this when targeting them as going way offshore is not the way to get one. Quite the opposite, actually.

If I were to go looking tomorrow (and I might), I would pull a few deep diving plugs like a Rapala, Yozuri or a Marauder. The plugs don't need to be far from the boat. Many of you that have fished long-range boats will remember many of the wahoo taken on the troll are taken right in the prop wash.

Another trick that worked like gangbusters for us in Panama was a very large size, natural cedar plug. For some reason, when trolled a little farther back, the wahoo loved them. Any shiny marlin lure—particularly the jet heads or bullet shapes—also seem to get bit real well. If you are willing to take a chance on losing some tackle, you can try to troll without the heavy cable and use some larger mono for leader. Just be prepared that you may lose tackle but will probably gain a few more bites.

I would work high spots like the 267, 14 and the ledge from Laguna down to Oceanside in rockfish-style, hard-bottom zones. Heck, you may catch your first SoCal wahoo! ■



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Ballyhoo Pay the "Bills"

I love marlin fishing. There is something about sitting in a fighting chair with a fresh cup of hot coffee in the early morning hours over a calm, glassy sea. The sun's rays cast a warm glow to all points of the compass and you've got four lines properly set and ready for instant action. It's the best.

We rarely use marlin jigs. We use ballyhoo with circle hooks. Why? Because in my humble opinion, ballyhoo gets bit more often than do jigs. Indeed, I recall fishing one fall day off Dana Point and we got five strikes on ballyhoo within 60 minutes. How many of those fish did we catch? Only one. And herein lies the subject of this column. Yes, ballyhoo will attract strikes, but it's all about what happens in the first three to 10 seconds that will determine if the fish stays on. After many trial by error attempts, here's what my learning curve has taught me. The following assumes you are trolling about 5 knots, are using circle hooks and have the rod in the holder, line in a release clip with just the clicker on and the drag all the way off.

On the strike and hook-set: I like to pick the rod up out of the holder, take the clicker off (I think the fish can sense the vibration of the clicker) and count to 10 before putting the lever in the full strike position. I try to take two or three seconds to move the lever so as not to move it too fast and pull the hook. Why a 10 count? Why not a five count? Because the fish, of course, will first squeeze the bait thinking it is killing it (of course the ballyhoo comes frozen and thawed for deployment).

It will then usually make a turn and when it does, it generally picks up speed after it swallows the bait. I'm still in free spool. So I find waiting to 10 makes sure the hook has time to enter into the marlin's mouth and that marlin is not still holding the bait sideways with the hook not yet in its mouth. I have lost too many fish applying the drag



too soon. Even at a 10 count, the circle hook ends up where it is supposed to be, in the corner of the mouth, but, of course, not always. The longer you wait, the more you risk gut hooking the fish, which, of course, decreases its chance of surviving after release.

Other anglers have different variations to this. I asked a few to share how they like to fish ballyhoo.

Bill DePriest (*One Hot Tuna*) on the strike and set: If the angler is someone without much ballyhoo experience, I tell them to set the hook with the rod in the holder. If the angler has experience, I tell them to take it out of the rod holder. The best way is to put

the reel in gear once you feel the fish turn and really take off ... meaning it has swallowed the bait. I would say between 3-5 seconds after the rigger pops. I then slowly put the reel in gear when using a circle hook.

Chase Offield (*Kelsey Lee*) on the strike and set: I always take the rod out of the holder, let the fish eat for about four to five seconds then drop the rod tip down and move the lever drag to just below strike. Once the fish has settled, I go to strike or just on the button.

Steve Behrens (*Joker*) on the strike and set: Treat it like a live bait. I point the rod tip at the fish and advance the drag slowly. When using a J hook, the rod position is not as critical but the hook-set is sooner, like three seconds. For a circle hook, maybe a five count.



Tip of the month: With all the time and money you spend in pursuit of your game fish, doesn't it make sense to have the very best kill bag on-board? Bleeding your fish immediately and keeping them on ice properly chilled can make all the difference in how the meat will taste. I use a Reliable kill bag for several reasons. First, it is very well insulated and keeps the ice from melting, especially important on overnight trips. Second, the zipper is thick and seems to last and work longer than other bags. And third, to paraphrase Donald Trump, "The bag is very, very, very strong. It is probably the strongest bag in the world." And it is. We've had two guys on each end lift well over 180 pounds of fish inside the bag without the handles breaking. Buy Reliable and you'll put the very best quality meat on the table. ■

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Popper Feature Makes Memories Pop

After reading my good friend Bob's article in last month's issue on poppers, it brought back many good memories for me (Bob Hoose's "Make Tuna POP!" August). After I retired from my real job, I was a sales rep for a fishing tackle supplier. One of the items that I sold was a Yozuri Popper.

In 1991, I went on a five-day trip out of San Diego and took my samples with me. Not many anglers had ever heard of poppers except a very few who knew of Pili Poppers from Hawaii. When I got these poppers out of my tackle box, everyone on the boat thought I was crazy to throw something like that to the tuna.

The captain nor the deckhands had ever used a popper. After I reeled in three to four tuna—and only a few from the rest of the anglers on the boat—everyone was in awe to see how well the poppers worked. When the trip was over I still had one of the three samples I had brought and the other two were being used by the deckhands. The decks and the captain retained all three of my poppers and said they worked so good that day they would order more from me later.

I still had a hard time selling these poppers at my tackle stores. Had customers been on that trip, they would have been sold because seeing is believing. Not until this year with the foaming tuna have I heard much about poppers. True, it almost takes the tuna to be foaming for the poppers to work really well.

~ Ed Dillon
Via email

Editor's note: *We feel your pain, Ed. But the fact is, fishing trends are slow to develop. Look at the history of West Coast sportfishing, from fiberglass to graphite to composite, mono to braid, wide reels to narrow, two-speeds. There is a time for everything—and when the fish are plentiful, the changes come more rapidly.*

Disgusted with Bluefin Regs

Just wanted to voice my extreme displeasure over the new bluefin tuna rules (Short Casts, September). I don't necessarily have a problem with the limit of two fish. We don't really need to keep more than that anyhow. I do think it is ridiculous that we, the recreational angler, are only allowed to keep two fish but the commercial fleet can catch hundreds of tons and sell them for .45/pound as pet food.

The new rules for tuna filleting are asinine. Not only is it an extreme waste of time, it just doesn't make sense. Keep the entire fish in one bag by itself. Two back loins, two belly loins, collar and two fins, belly strip with anus attached: Is that so the warden can sniff the tuna's butt and determine whether or not it is a bluefin?

No longer can you process fish at sea. You now have to partially clean the tuna, throw it in a trash bag and then, when you are no longer in fear of a DFW officer jumping out of the bushes, you can finish cleaning your fish. Then what? Take your pile of fins and skin to the dump? Foul your trash cans so that your neighbors hate you? Bury it in the yard so that the skunks and coyotes

can come dig it up later?

What happened to recycling and conservation? We are now wasting a garbage bag for every single fish that is caught.

I can tell the difference between bluefin meat and yellowfin meat. Why can't a DFW officer?

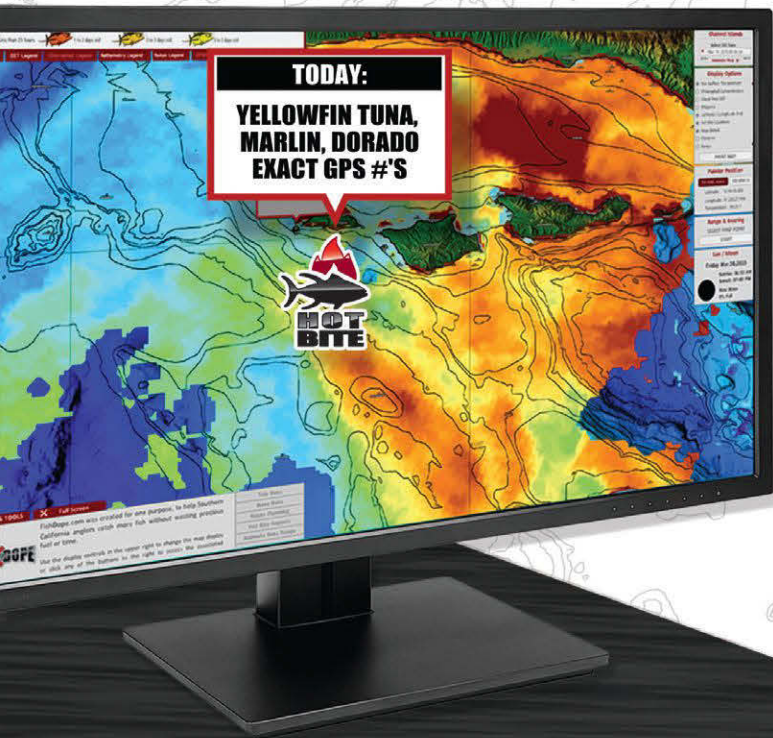
What is the commercial fleet doing to prove that they aren't catching more than their quota of bluefin? Nothing. They have what is called "by-catch," which means they can kill an awful lot of our endangered bluefin while in the pursuit of other species. And guess what? If by chance they wrap more bluefin than they intended and they are already over their quota, they just dump them back in the sea. Or, they take them to the processor and grind them up for pet food; nobody will know the difference anyway.

Why can't we apply a little common sense to our fish and game laws?

I'd like to encourage everyone to write to the Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding the new law. Maybe if enough of us speak out, common sense will prevail.

~ Peter Corselli
La Habra Heights ■





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Understanding Multi-day Bag Limits

ANGLERS THAT FILE FOR A PERMIT PRIOR TO THEIR TRIP CAN KEEP MULTI-DAY LIMITS OF TUNA.

Just remember that you're allowed 10 yellowfin per day in U.S. waters, but if you catch bluefin it's only two per day with a total of six per trip of three or more days.

Did you know that if you plan an offshore fishing trip lasting more than one consecutive calendar day, and intend to keep bag limits for multiple days, you must file a multi-day fishing trip declaration form with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife before your trip?

A "Declaration for Multi-Day Fishing Trip" form may not be filed for a trip unless the trip is continuous and extends for a period of 12 hours or more on the first and last days of the trip. Also, no berthing or docking are permitted within five miles of the mainland shore during the trip. This is applicable to both private vessels and commercial passenger fishing vessels.

The form must be submitted to the nearest department office for any person aboard such boat to possess more than one bag limit of saltwater fin fish, abalone, lobster and rock scallops. If mailed, it MUST be received at least 48 hours prior to departure. The fee for filing a multi-day declaration is currently \$5.92.

With this permit, anglers are allowed to keep full limits for each day of their trip. The only exception to this deals with the new bluefin tuna regulations. Anglers are allowed two fish per day with a maximum of six fish per trip on trips lasting three or more days.

Who is in Charge of MPA Education?

According to a recent press release, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and California State Parks have teamed up to teach California students about the state's network of marine protected areas (MPAs). Through the wonders of technology, like live videoconferencing and online interactive lessons, thousands of students will now learn about California's MPAs. The lessons are intended to teach the important role that individual MPAs, and the MPA network as a whole, play in safeguarding California's marine resources.

The collaborative project is part of California State Park's PORTS (Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students) program. A free distance learning program, PORTS helps schools meet academic content standards in the

context of California State Parks. The program features 10 different state parks and reaches roughly 50,000 students each year.

While this educational outreach was part of the MLPA master plan and looks like a positive thing on the surface, my cynical side couldn't help but wonder exactly what they were teaching. Well, a quick Google search showed that the program, "Science of Habitat Protection and Restoration," was designed with the help of the Crystal Cove Alliance. For those unfamiliar with the CCA, they are one of the groups heavily involved with the Laguna Bluebelt Coalition, whose stated goal is to "allow all activities except the killing of marine life."

While this may sound like an anti-fishing sentiment, the good news is that the CCA has plans for us fishermen. According to their website, their solution would be to ban fishing but "create a partnership that would further conservation efforts as well as provide fishermen with new opportunities for sustainably keeping boats on the water with non-consumptive educational K-12 field trips." I'm not going to comment on this other than to say that sometimes I really wished I lived in another state.

Reporting Illegal Fishing Activity Just Got Easier

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has made it easier to report illegal fishing activity. Along with their toll free number, they now have a texting option as well as an app.

If you witness a poaching or polluting incident or any fish and wildlife violation, or have information about such a violation, the CDFW recommends immediately reporting it. You can do that by calling the CalTIP number (888)



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Finally, you can download the free CALTIP smart phone application that operates similarly to tip411 by creating an anonymous two-way conversation with wildlife officers to report wildlife and pollution violations. The CALTIP App can be downloaded for free via the Google Play Store and iTunes App Store.

Be prepared to give the fullest possible account of the incident including the name, address, age and description of the suspect, vehicle description, direction of travel, license number, type of violation and when and where it occurred. You do not have to give your name.

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ANGLERS FOUGHT HARD TO KEEP THE MLPA FROM BECOMING A REALITY. The sad part is that the same people we fought against are the ones now in charge of educational outreach. Photo from BD Outdoors



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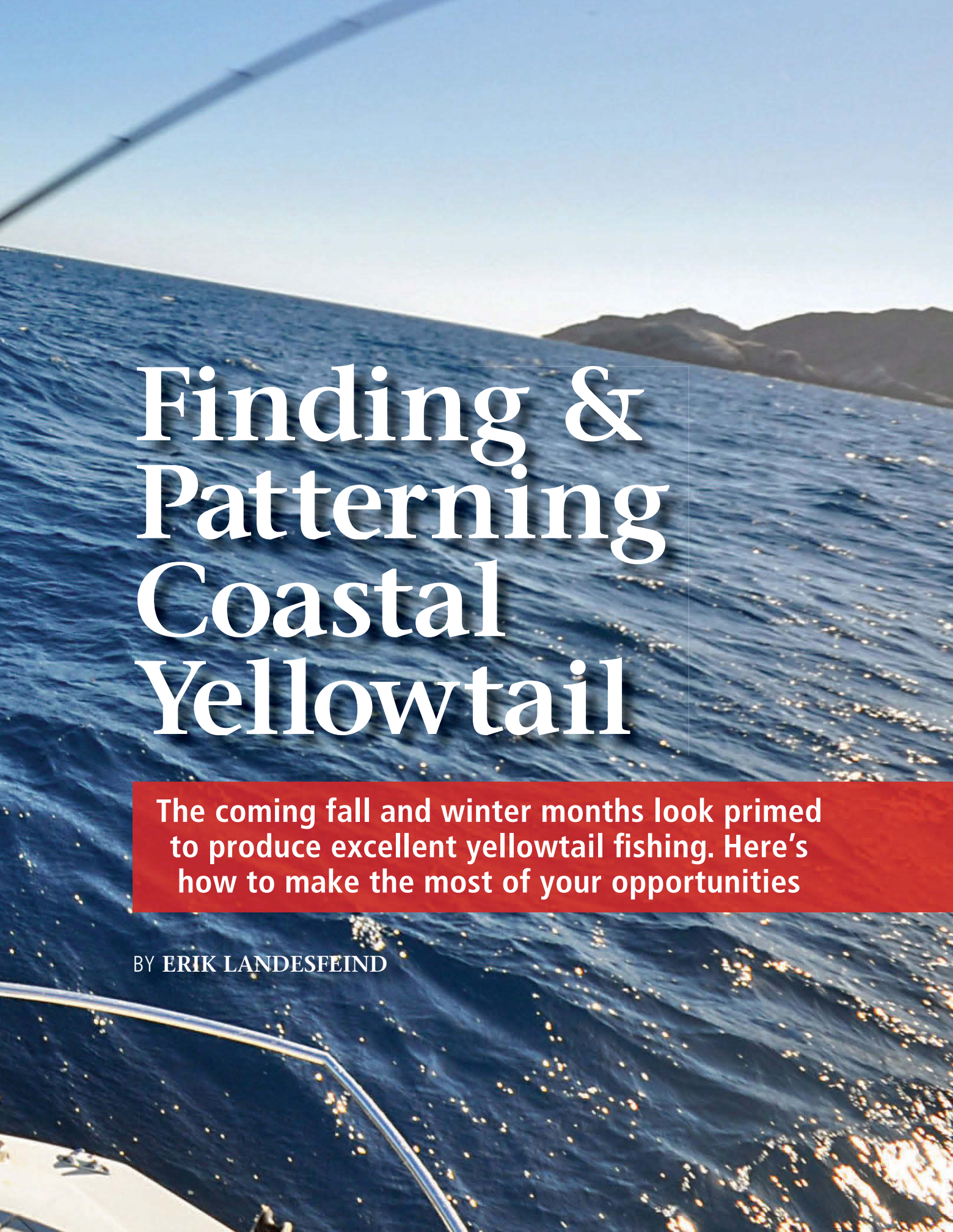
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Finding & Patterning Coastal Yellowtail

The coming fall and winter months look primed to produce excellent yellowtail fishing. Here's how to make the most of your opportunities

BY ERIK LANDESFEIND

Whether you credit El Niño, blame it on Alaskan high pressure ridging, or think that it's a byproduct of the warm water blob that's been lurking in the northeastern Pacific the past couple years, one thing is for certain: 2015 is going to go down in history as the year of the giant coastal yellowtail. I think that a friend of mine summed it up best when he said, "It's like someone took all the yellows from Cedros Island and delivered them to my doorstep." In his case that doorstep is the waters off Long Beach, but the amazing part about this year is that it delivered these giant yellows to every doorstep from San Diego to Santa Barbara.

During the summer months it was pretty simple to catch one of these trophy yellowtail. Just line up behind the 30 other boats at the bait receiver on Saturday morning, then follow the string of boats to the area that had been biting for weeks,

here through next summer. So why not use these off-season months to fine-tune your fishing techniques? That way when things do start to get crowded again, you'll have the confidence to drive away from those crowded areas and find your own fish. Here are some simple steps to get you pointed in the right direction.

Pregame Preparation

Before you can make an accurate prediction as to where fish might be biting, you need to understand where they were biting and the reason they chose that particular location to bite. Using this year's hot August yellowtail bite off Long Beach as an example, let's break down the where, when and how.

This bite started out at the 150 spot, which is a hard bottom area that lies between the Horseshoe Kelp and the deepwater rockfish areas off Long Beach. The 150, like almost every spot along the coast that has produced big yellows this year, is a large hard bottom flat adjacent to



find your spot in the crowd, and commence downloading of fish. Though not my cup of tea, this pattern worked extremely well for thousands of boaters every week.

But summer is over and as we transition into fall and winter, there's not always going to be a crowd of boats around to show people where the yellowtail are biting. In my opinion, that's a good thing! The fish are still around and unless something drastically changes, they should be

deeper water. It's impossible to say for certain why these spots have been holding yellows, but I'd venture a guess that it has something to do with upwellings.

These upwellings are the result of deep-water currents running into the coastal shelf. This impact results in all of the plankton and other nutrients these currents carry getting pushed up toward the surface. These plumes

WINTERTIME MEANS NO CROWDS AND BIG YELLOWS. JOHN CURRY CAUGHT THIS ONE A FEW DAYS AFTER CHRISTMAS.

The cold December morning may have kept the parking lot at the launch ramp empty but it didn't stop the yellows from biting.



of nutrients attract bait fish, which tend to school near the deep water edges of the flats, and the aggregations of bait fish in turn attract the attention of any yellowtail cruising along those same deep water currents.

This year it seemed that most yellowtail bites started around the new or full moon. I'm venturing another guess here, but those lunar periods also have the largest tide swings and strongest currents. Stronger currents mean increased upwelling and larger plumes of nutrients. Theoretically this would lead to increased baitfish activity and greater drawing power for the yellowtail that are passing by in deep water.

As the lunar cycle moved away from the extremes, the yellowtail tended to spread out this summer. In the case of the August bite, the fish that had been biting on the 150 spread out and started biting on the Horseshoe Kelp itself. It's interesting to note that the two best bites were around the 105 area and the Rockpile. The 105 area is a no-brainer as it lies directly adjacent to the 150, but the move to the Rockpile isn't as easy to explain as the fish would have to swim a good distance to get there and pass plenty of prime

habitat on the way.

The story becomes a lot clearer if you look at a chart of the area. While similar in depth and topography to the rest of the Horseshoe Kelp, the Rockpile area has one thing the rest of it doesn't: deep-water access. With Fermin Canyon abutting it to the west, the Rockpile has the same potential to upwell and aggregate baitfish as the 150. So it makes sense that the fish would show up there as well.

If you fished for yellowtail during the first half of this year, you know that we had a huge influx of red crabs in

FIGURING OUT THE PATTERN CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

between catching one fish and leaving them biting. The author found these fish to be holding under single terns that were flying high and pausing long enough to indicate the location of feeding yellowtail.

// *Before you can make an accurate prediction as to where fish might be biting, you need to understand where they were biting and the reason they chose that particular location to bite."*

many areas. Well, those red crabs are carried by the same currents that carry nutrients, baitfish and yellowtail. So it's no surprise that they first showed up in the exact same areas that have produced the most yellowtail this year.

So, how is my long-winded explanation supposed to help you figure out where to catch yellowtail? It's actually

pretty simple. The first step is to get a chart and look at the bottom topography of areas where you know that yellows have been caught this year and then look for other areas that have similar features. These features include water depth, terrain, orientation to the coastline and whether or not they are adjacent to deep water. Once you've found a few areas like that it's time to get out on the water and start looking.

Game Day

Things can happen really fast when you're prospecting for yellowtail away from the fleet. Hours of fruitless searching can turn into seconds of opportunity and if you're not ready, you might miss your only shot of the day. I can't tell you how many times I've been driving, saw a couple birds starting to act right, pulled back the throttle, grabbed my rod and got a jig in the air just seconds before a big yellow came up crashing on bait. Those casts don't always result in hook ups, but if I'd have waited even 30 seconds longer, I probably wouldn't have had any shot at all.

To keep things simple, I'll forgo a stop at the bait receiver when targeting yellows, as I've found they'll bite the jig just fine when they aren't getting run over by a fleet of boats. By the same token, yellows that pop up on



KEEP IT SIMPLE. ONE JIG IN A BAITFISH COLOR IS ALL YOU NEED. The author fishes his on a Rainshadow RCLB 80M matched to a Penn Fathom 25N full of 65-pound spectra and a short 60-pound fluorocarbon leader.

bait fish don't seem to be too picky about what jig you're throwing. So, I'll normally have a yo-yo jig, like a Tady 4/0 heavy, tied on my jig stick. This lure gives me the flexibility to drop the jig on deep meter marks or fast wind it on the surface

if the fish pop up. If it seems like it's mostly going to be a surface bite I'll trade out the yo-yo jig for a Tady 45 light.

Now that you've got your tackle and an idea of the areas you'd like to check out, it's time to get to work. The first thing you'll want to do when you arrive in your zone is to attempt to locate and identify a food source. Yellows will eat just about anything, but the ones on

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YELLOWTAIL AREN'T PICKY EATERS.

These two were part of a double hook up. One ate a Tady 45 light and the other sucked down a Tady 9 heavy. Don't worry about what jig to throw, just focus on getting it in front of the fish; they'll bite it.

the coast this year have been keyed in on three basic things; red crabs, anchovies and sardines.

If you find any of these three in an area that you believe has the potential to produce yellowtail, you can get a good idea of whether or not there is any predation occurring by observing the posture of the baitfish. I'd immediately rule out any area where the baitfish appear to be completely relaxed as happy bait fish are not usually conducive to good fishing.

If you can see the baitfish in the water and

they are doing anything other than running for their lives, the yellows probably aren't around. The same holds true for the baitfish you'll see on the meter. Evenly spread and fuzzy schools of bait are no good, nor are long strings of crab that meter like a wide thermocline. Baitfish that are having a bad day show up as small tightly grouped balls or broken and sporadic lines of crab. Find that and you won't even need to meter the yellowtail to know that you're in the right zone as the harassed bait schools have already told you everything you need to know.

Another extremely valuable tool in the war on yellowtail is the common tern. These birds, more than any other species, are the ones to watch when looking for fish. Find some terns spiraling and picking over a specific spot and you can be sure that there is some sort of feeding activity occurring below them.

It's going to take some time spent observing tern behavior before you'll get a good understanding of what these



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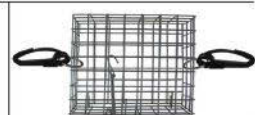
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YELLOWS OFTEN COME TO THE SURFACE TO FEED AROUND SLACK TIDES, so you're going to want to watch your tide chart and be ready. Matt Kotch took advantage of the tide to pick off this big yellow.



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MATT KOTCH CAUGHT THIS YELLOW ON THE FIRST DAY OUT on his new boat with no electronics. He and the author found the fish by finding a bird school of terns.



birds are telling you, but the basics of it are pretty simple. Despite being small and hyper looking, terns are actually very relaxed and efficient birds. So, if you see a group of them that are just cruising around and occasionally diving down to pick something off the water, those birds are simply bidding their time while waiting for something to happen.

One thing I've noticed is the higher the tern is flying, the deeper whatever it's tracking is in the water column. So, if those lazily high flyers suddenly get low and start flying urgently, it's time to get that jig in the air. The yellows are about to pop.

Once you've located fish, these birds will also help you to keep track of their direction of movement. When yellows are feeding on the surface, they'll usually attract seagulls, pelicans and cormorants, as well as terns. But when those fish start moving, it's going to be the terns that are on the front edge of the assault. So, you'll

want to remain off to the side of those birds while running well ahead of them and then shut down and wait for them to come within casting range before firing a jig.

TERNS ARE HANDS DOWN THE BEST INDICATOR OF YELLOWTAIL FEEDING ACTIVITY. Find the right birds and you will find the fish. The trick is to pay attention to how they're acting so you'll know what to look for next time.

Post Game

One of the biggest mistakes we make as anglers is to attribute our success to our own awesomeness rather trying to figure out exactly why we caught fish. To improve as anglers, we need to look past that and spend a few minutes breaking down our trip and looking at what worked and what didn't. This isn't as much fun as patting yourself on the back, but done properly, this post mortem will lead to theories as to why things turned out the way they did. Your job on the next trip is to put those theories to the test and see if you've actually figured something out or if you just got lucky.

They say that good fishing never made anyone a good fisherman. But this year's opportunities for success on the water are as good as they'll probably ever be in Southern California. So, why not get out there, catch some yellowtail and focus on building confidence in your ability to go out and find your own fish? You'll be way ahead of the game when the fishing goes back to normal.



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Dream Trip

Aboard the *Intrepid*

BY JIM NIEMIEC



WAHOO ON THE RAIL caught by Thomas Tran.

Having fished aboard most all of the long range sportfishing vessels that ply the prolific waters off Baja California and beyond, it would be almost impossible to top the fishability, crew, sea worthiness and meals of that served up aboard the 116-foot *Intrepid*.

Pacific Coast Sportfishing magazine was invited to spend eight days this past summer aboard the *Intrepid* with the opportunity to fish a number of hot spots along Baja's majestic coastline. With Mexican limits of yellowtail and yellowfin tuna in the slammer, topping off the trip was a run out to Alijos Rocks to duel with razor-toothed wahoo.

Arriving at Point Loma Sportfishing during a busy summer morning found limited parking available, but fortunately being dropped off made for an easy transfer of tackle, gear and clothing. Loading was quick and professional with rods and tackle boxes placed within easy reach and luggage carried down into staterooms and a huge lunch spread out in the galley along with lots of extra munchies.

Captain Kevin Osborne pulled away from the docks and it was off to the



LOADING
CURED
SARDINES
aboard the
Intrepid.

bait receivers, where the deck crew selected enough cured sardines that would hopefully carry us through the entire trip. It took nearly 1.5 hours to load the bait, first into the huge on deck bait tanks and the remainder of hot sardines were placed down into two slamers.

Most of the crew of the *Intrepid* have been together for years and work as a team to provide the utmost in angling advice, tackle tips, gear preparation, casting, various fishing techniques and styles and five-star class meal presentations. When it comes to taking care of anglers, the crew goes above and beyond to offer the best in customer service.

Captain Osborne opted not to head north to fish the tuna schools off Southern California but instead headed the *Intrepid* south in hopes of reaching fishable waters by the next morning. It would be trolling through blue water with occasional stops on kelps and jig strikes. The captain wanted to be at The Ridge to tap its prolific waters for yellowtail by sundown.

After a dinner of prime rib, it was time for chartermaster David Tang to raffle off a wide selection of donated Okuma fishing gear, lures, bombs and other neat fishing accessories. Everyone on board received a tackle goodie bag, a tradition of fishing the Ray Jarvis Memorial Charter.

Anglers were geared up with a variety of tackle and most opted for newer, smaller reels, spooled with braided line, graphite composite rods for either fishing bait or casting iron jigs and a selection of Owner circle or J hooks.

After criss-crossing The Ridge, the scanning sonar showed big schools of yellows over rocks covered with strands of kelp. Anchoring up on the 38 Spot

MIKE'S BIG WAHOO is gaffed by Capt. Chad Smith.

**HOME GUARD
CEDROS ISLAND
YELLOWTAIL**
caught by Stephen.





didn't produce very good fishing that evening and into the night, but Capt. Osborne was confident that these yellows would bite in the morning with more current.

That next morning's bite was explosive from the start, with yellows in the 18- to 25-pound class coming over the rail for hours. The activity and blood in the water attracted brown sharks and they took their toll of yellows, usually just as an angler would call for a gaff. Unfortunately, many yellows were lost to sharks, but the bite still continued strong throughout the day with most every angler asking for additional numbered fish tags. You just could not make a cast and not hook into a yellowtail, but many were lost in the kelp.

With half a slammer filled with yellowtail and a few miscellaneous catches, Osborne made the call to leave The Ridge and make a straight run out to Alijos Rocks. Part of his rationale was to avoid the ominous winds of Hurricane Delores brewing up off mainland Mexico.

Despite a strong northwesterly blow, the *Intrepid* held its place under rough conditions using twin stabilizers and bulbous bow to make for a smoother ride. Noted the captain, "The installation of a bulbous bow nose and our stabilizers allow this vessel to prevent roll or pitch in rough weather. We are the only long-range sportboat that has these unique extra features. The bulbous breaks up the water off the bow like a diver does when he enters the water, offering up a smoother ride all the time. This boat rides so smoothly that we never hear of a

KING CRAB FEAST served up by Hector Quintanar.



glass of wine spilling in the salon."

Upon an early morning arrival at Alijos, conditions were ideal with just a small surge pushing up against the rocks, little wind to deal with and an abundance of boobie birds, shearwaters, pectorals and a pair of frigate birds, a good indicator that there was life here in abundance.

Wahoo Wake-Up

Wahoo are perhaps the jewel of the pelagics of the eastern Pacific, not only for offering up exciting fishing but also seared on a barbecue for a dinner feast. Here, some anglers tied on "bombs" in their hot color preference. Others opted for surface iron or rigged Owner 4/0 J hooks that were connected to braided line or Seaguar or Berkley ProSpec fluorocarbon by way of Sevenstrand wire. My tackle choice for wahoo was a Saltiga Lever Drag 30 matched to a Proteus composite graphite rod and fished with the new Daiwa



STEAK AND LOBSTER FOR DINNER aboard the *Intrepid*.

J-Braid X line, Seagaur 40-pound leader material and an Owner 4/0 hook.

Prior to putting trolling gear in the water at Alijos, the captain and on-deck crew instructed anglers on what to do when hooked up to a racing wahoo. Collectively they said, "Once you get a hook-up just begin to grind on the reel. Don't bother to try and play a wahoo like you would a tuna or yellowtail as these fish will just plain eat you alive. The troll fish needs get on deck quickly so other anglers can cast bombs, iron or live baits. These critters have extremely sharp teeth and we don't want anyone standing near a wahoo when it comes over the rail so listen to a crew member and we don't want ever to see flip-flops or open toed shoes on deck."

Added Osborne over the PA system, "Guys, we will start off our trolling rotation now. Those standing by should wait until I get the boat in position to make a cast with a 'bomb,' iron or live bait. You don't want to cast over a hooked trolled wahoo, and you also want to cast to the side of the boat where I last see them on the side-scanning sonar."

It didn't take long for the first wahoo to come aboard followed by my bait fish and a flurry of lost fish

for a variety of reasons. According to Osborne, about half of the wahoo hooked end up chewing through wire or fluorocarbon, get unbuttoned from a bomb, iron or just twisting out of a trolled jig. These fish are considered the fastest in the eastern Pacific and can be brutal on tackle.

According to Capt. Jesus Campanioni, wahoo are very reactive to fishing pressure and will often back off the bite from time to time. When huge new schools arrive at Alijos Rocks, they may bite well on the first day, then it becomes a real pick bite and ends up with ones and two's before shutting off.

"Wahoo are not caught at night and really don't like dirty water," Campanioni noted. "I prefer to back hook a live bait and don't recommend chrome swivels or bright hooks, as wahoo have excellent eyesight and will shy away from anything that isn't to their selective liking."

While it wasn't a wide open bite, by rotating anglers out of a trolling position who had already decked a coveted wahoo, the captain came close in his quest to have each angler deck one.

Weather Watch

With eyes set on the scanning sonar for orange/red marks, Osborne also watched updated weather reports on the fast approaching hurricane on the computer in the wheelhouse.

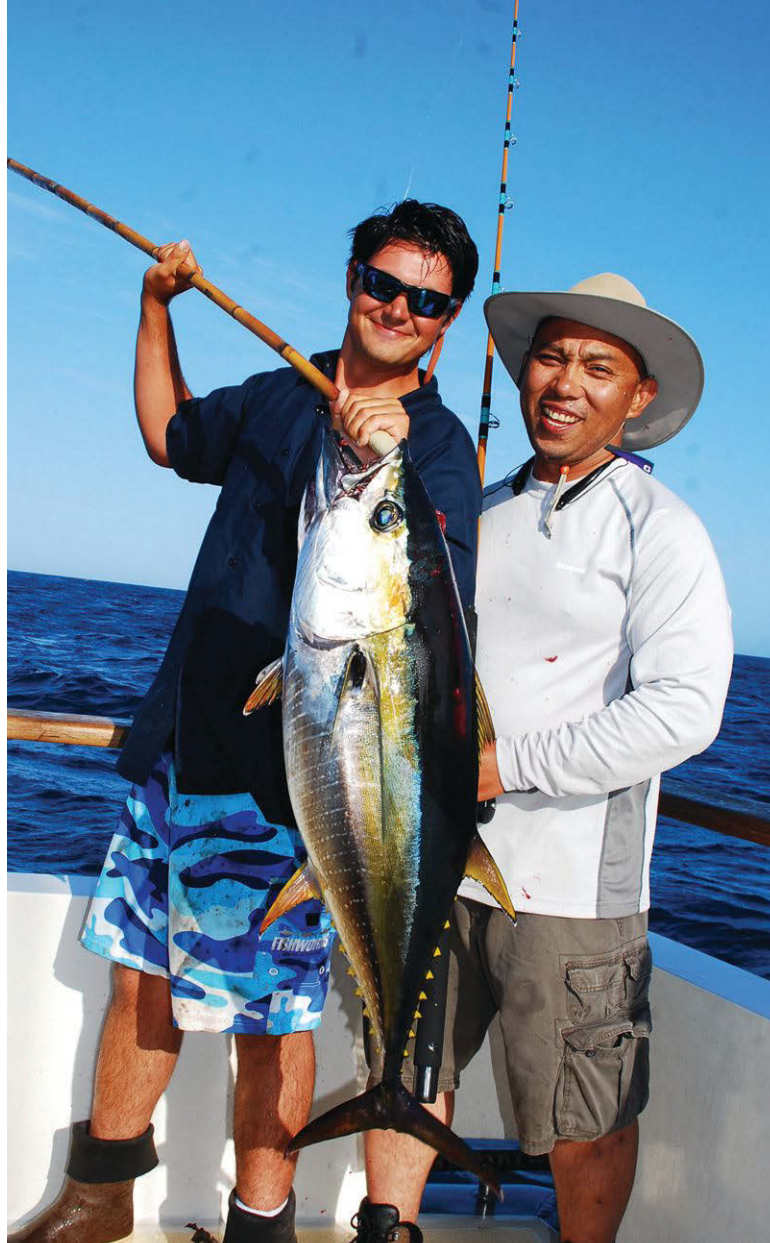
Hurricane Delores was on the move north at a sustained speed of 7.8 knots with winds already up past hurricane force.

"I don't want to get caught out here by this storm," offered up the captain. "You cannot outrun a hurricane and its powerful winds. We are going to have to cut our stay here at the rocks short, heading up and into safer waters as a precaution for all on board. After some 24 hours of running we will be tracking right up through the yellowfin tuna grounds that should offer up excellent fishing."

He then opted to head for the beach and fish his way up the coast with the first stop to be in the lee of Cedros Island. Anglers on board had plenty of yellowtail in the slammer so the main species targeted would be white seabass, halibut, calico bass and maybe a good chance of hooking into one of the homeguard yellowtail that this Baja island is so famous for.

After couple of unsuccessful drifts, the *Intrepid* moved in closer to the island that allowed anglers on the bow to cast surface iron Tady

**DECKHAND
EATHAN
CHILDERS**
gaffed this
yellowtail for
Steve Nguyen.



KELP PADDY
with balloon
holds fish.





PHIL ANDERSON with his Alijos Rocks wahoo.

jigs toward shore. Seals lurked in the chumline but stayed away from the bow section, which allowed a few lucky anglers to hook into huge mossbacks and land them. While only a few big yellows in the 40- to 45-pound class were landed, it sure made for an exciting late afternoon of angling as the sun set behind the rugged mountains of Isla Cedros. Topping off on the drift was a 45-pound white seabass that drew the attention of all on board.

During the run from Cedros to the tuna waters, anglers re-rigged for tuna and offshore pelagic fishing while the galley crew prepared lunch, a sashimi/sushi mid-afternoon snack and prepped steaks for dinner. Food served aboard the *Intrepid* is like dining in a five-star restaurant, with Chef Perry McMillian in charge of the kitchen, backed up by Hector Quintanar.

Yellowfin tuna had been pretty much scattered along the Baja coastline most all season long, with a better showing off the California coastline. Even though tuna fishing turned out to be red hot for the *Intrepid*, there were no big tuna caught and it would be too far of a run north to get into the bite in northern waters. The golden triangle area off Punta Colonet was holding some tuna, some 210 miles south of Point Loma, but our captain was heading to an area that showed warm water on the most recent Terrafin map. The San Diego-based spotter plane was not flying at the time so we relied upon on

board equipment and the experience of the captains to find potentially good fishing water.

With calm seas and little wind in place, the hurricane moving off to the west, conditions were ideal for a good shot at yellowfin. Trolling rotations were again put in place with a selection of Marauders, cedar plugs and feathers jigs deployed across the stern. It didn't take long for the first tuna to jump on the cedar plug with a few bait fish to follow. The captain then began to box the area and we were soon joined by three other Cadillac sportboats in these tuna-rich waters. After a few more stops with increased numbers of 18- to 25-pound tuna being put down in the slammer, the ocean exploded with foaming tuna off the stern corner that followed a quadruple jig stop.

It was one of those wide open tuna bites where every bait was crushed and the feeding frenzy went on for nearly four hours. Tuna were jumping on Shimano poppers, light surface iron and sardines.



WAHOO ON THE RAIL for angler Stephen Sotelo.



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Colonet and Homeward Bound

Overnight, we continued north heading for the protected waters of Punta Colonet where there would be an opportunity to fish for white seabass. At sunrise, thick clouds of building Hurricane Delores could be seen over the San Telmo Valley of Baja, but the beachside fishing village just west of the rural town of Colonet was picturesque when reflected off the calm blue waters along the coast.

Our boat was approached by a local fishing panga and after an exchange of fishing options and a few scoops of live bait, we followed the Mexican skiff up the coast to what had been the hot spot for white seabass earlier in the morning. Seabass are a very fickle species and such was the case as none were hooked next to the kelp and only a few skinnies were decked.

The next move would be up the coast to finish off what had been



a very productive eight-day summer fishing experience with a few drops for lingcod, rockfish and assorted bottom dwellers.

Calm seas prevailed that afternoon and into the early evening hours as we neared our home

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produced these
seven wahoo.

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ISLA CEDROS
white seabass.

for the closing afternoon snack and dinner. At cocktail hour he offered up a couple of plates of giant king crabs with all the trimmings and that was just for afternoon appetizers.

When it came time for everyone to come into the salon for dinner there was a rich aroma of broiling lobster and a tangy sauce that would top off a 12-ounce chunk of filet mignon. The crew, all dressed up in colorful shirts, served the meal as the galley crew stepped out to acknowledge a round of applause from the anglers.

The ETA of the *Intrepid* at the dock was set at 5:30 a.m. and upon anchoring up in San Diego Bay just after 2 a.m., word came of the now Tropical Storm Delores dumping a couple of inches of rain at the docks the prior afternoon with more expected for Sunday. Thankfully, Captain Osborne had kept the

port of San Diego. Chef Perry was not quite done with his culinary delights

Intrepid and its 26 anglers and crew out of harm's way as a severe storm front pushed through that afternoon, making for miserable fishing conditions for tuna and yellowtail offshore.

"Fishing on the *Intrepid* with this



CAPT. KEVIN OSBORNE
in the wheelhouse of the *Intrepid*.

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crew and group of fishermen is like fishing with family,” answered David Tang, when asked by PCS to sum up the Ray Jarvis Memorial Charter. “We continue to thank Ray for bringing us together each year.”

***Intrepid* Credentials**

The specs and features on the deluxe long range sportfisher *Intrepid* are impressive to say the least. The vessel’s length is 116 feet and boasts a 27-foot beam. Its fuel capacity is 20,000 gallons, providing up a 10,000 mile nautical mile range while powered by twin 750hp Caterpillar 3412 marine engines.

Hull construction is of corrosion-resistant steel base and there are five refrigerated/RSW fish holds to preserve catches made on long-range trips off Baja and beyond.

In addition to superior design and construction, the *Intrepid* features a complete topside tackle center, 13 two-person staterooms with individually controlled air conditioning and direct TV/DVD flat screens with remote controls. And to top it all off, this sportfisher offers the lightest passenger loads among the entire long-range fleet.

For booking information and general details, log on to the *Intrepid*’s website at www.fishintrepid.com or give General Manager Steve Hoffman a direct phone call at their Point Loma Sportfishing office by dialing (619) 224-4088.



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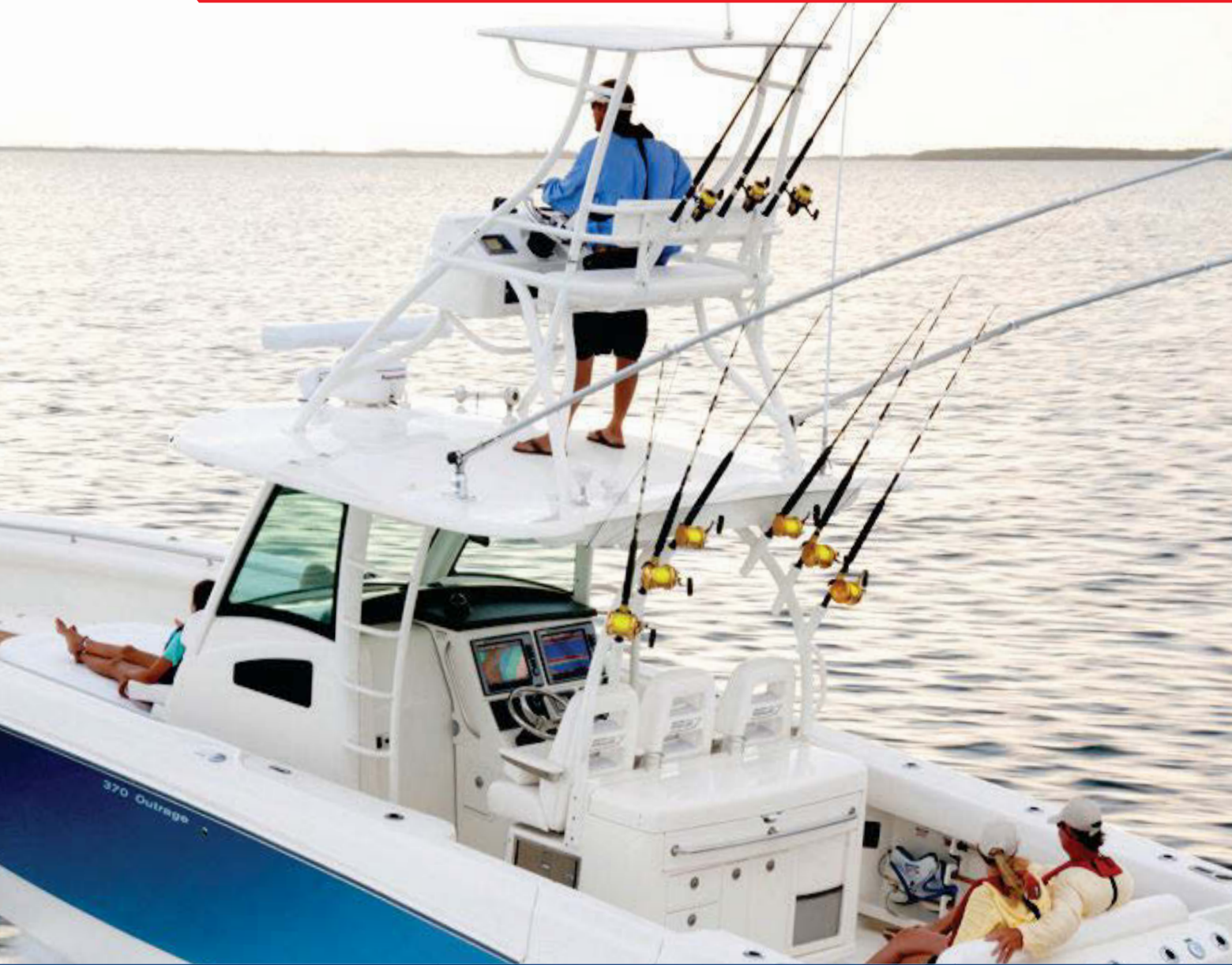


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sportboat roundup

BY BILL ROECKER

Bitters: A Peak Fishing Month



FALL IS A WONDERFUL TIME TO HANG AGGRESSIVE YELLOWS or tuna on the surface jig. Photo by Tim Ekstrom, Royal Star Sportfishing.

Will we have fall fishing like we did last year? It might very well be better. SoCal offshore fishing in autumn of 2014 had something for everyone fishing within a day or two of San Diego:

"We had a nice surprise this morning as we pulled up to catch yellowtail and caught wahoo instead," wrote *Red Rooster III* skipper Andy Cates on Sept. 30 of last year. "After the smoke settled we had 19 nice sized wahoo for the morning."

"[A]nother excellent day featuring wahoo, tuna, yellowtail, pargo and excellent weather to work in," wrote *Independence* skipper Jeff DeBuys on Oct. 1, 2014. "Things got going very early and kept going all day long for us. Tuna up to 40 pounds, some lunker yellowtail, a few 'hoos ..."

A week later, after Hurricane Simon, *Searcher* skipper Aaron Remy noted, "We found a kelp that was loaded with 15- to 30-pound dorado and they were biting! I have seen lots of wide-open bites but never on this grade of dorado. It was like fishing in an aquarium—truly amazing."

October 17 was the day Scott Meisel's *Condor*, fishing on a day-and-a-half trip about



JAN ABBOTT SHOWS HER PLEASURE WITH HER HUGE, BAIT-CAUGHT BULL DORADO. One this big can give an angler a tuna-tough fight on light gear. Photo by Tim Ekstrom, Royal Star Sportfishing.

50 miles from San Diego, produced 10 wahoo hookups. That wasn't completely surprising, but these skinnies were hooked on deep-fished jigs under kelp, not trolled up on Marauders like most other wahoo caught near San Diego last year. Scott said he hung one on a Hopkins jig and lost it when the 9/0 Siwash hook straightened out. Four of the wahoo were decked, along with a dozen yellowfin tuna and limits of big dorado up to 25 or 30 pounds.

Even so, most anglers quit fishing about then, and local sportboats couldn't get out.

On Oct. 30, I fished aboard the *New Lo-An* of Point Loma Sportfishing. Our skipper was John Bell, a nice feller with his work cut out for him, trying to locate tuna and the good-sized dorado known to be in the area. But with only our boat and the *Condor* fishing, we had to find our own fish, and kelp paddies proved to be almost extinct in the waters just south. We picked up a dorado trolling, with nary a paddy to be seen. Mindful of recent wahoo catches, we kept a couple of Marauders going in the spread, along with the normal skirted Zukers and smaller hootchies.

We picked up a few mixed fish trolling and found a paddy with dorado on it. They bit well but not long, and we were on our way. Around mid-afternoon we had a stop for some yellowfin, more schoolies, but they wouldn't stay with the boat. We picked some and motored on.

Late in the afternoon we found our El Dorado, the magic paddy, well marked by a pole with blue and orange ribbons fluttering. It was a big kelp, with so many dorado nearby they could cover a football field. When the school turned down light, a huge patch of water lit up, flashing in the sun. They came to the boat and the ensuing chaos prompted me to land one quickly in the corner and then to lead my next fish up toward the bow to avoid the crowd.

There were only 12 of us on the boat, but with ravenous dorado trying to eat the paint off the stern, the back end was very busy, with all the whooping, hollering, cussing, running, and over and under tricks a dozen anglers could muster. So I enjoyed playing this fish without distraction. I got a half-dozen high jumps out of my mahi, which proved to be about a 15 pounder, big enough to make some good eating.

Not far from our stern, under a cloud of

A TROLLING STRIKE PROMPTS ANGLERS TO GET A BAIT INTO THE WATER ON THE SLIDE, but don't foul the trollers hooked up.
Photo by Bill Roecker, FishingVideos.com.



SCHOOLIE TUNA LIKE THIS YELLOWFIN MAKE UP THE BULK OF FALL FISH—but keep a heavier outfit ready for the big boys.
Photo by Bill Roecker, FishingVideos.com.



birds, the *Condor* was enjoying the same wide-open bite. Skipper John was directing the action on *Lo-An's* stern.

"I've got my two dorado," I said to him. "I'm thinking I should quit."

"No, don't quit yet," he said. "I marked some tuna here, and somebody just got one."

So I went back forward, and cast a sardine as far as I could, opposite the main action on the stern. I got a bite right away as the sardine took off, and moments later my third tuna came aboard, gaffed for me by deck tech Dominic Calo, who nailed it in the head, saving the meat. I complimented him for that and put my rod up to take photos as the sun went low and the light began to fade. It was a memorable dorado bite. I felt fortunate to be there.

Fall fishing tends to be good like that. The weather's nice and fish are feeding hard, at least at times, and they often bite in frenzies. You don't need to use fluorocarbon then, though the abrasion resistance of fluoro may help prevent dorado chew-offs. You can get by just fine with plain old

(cheap) monofilament, preferably 30 or 40 pound.

Expensive hooks aren't necessary, either. Standard J hooks from any good maker will do the trick on interested biters. You can fish them like circle hooks, letting the fish set the hook as you wind down on a taker. Like circles, the J hooks will also find the corner of the fish's mouth most of the time. Dorado have surprisingly

WHEN FALL FISHING GETS TOO GOOD, ANGLERS MUST RELEASE OVER-LIMIT FISH.

This dorado is getting released by the gaff, which will pop the line near the hook.

Photo by Bill Roecker, FishingVideos.com.



big mouths lined with teeth, so a 3/0 or 4/0 hook is appropriate.

Willing fish trademark fall fishing, and they don't require any more stealth than getting a swimming bait into the bite zone, which may be right next to the boat. When you look over the side and see those brown backs zipping past the corner, you're on fall yellowfin.

October of last year was a fine month for fishing, from Los Angeles south to the Hurricane Bank and the southern banks off lower Baja. There's little reason to think this year won't be sweet as well, and the warm water may well last into December, with great fishing on a tide of tuna that lifts all boats.

Bill Roecker owns FishingVideos.com, where he posts daily reports from the long-range fleet and other sources, and Oceanic Productions, which published his book At The Rail: Long Range Fishing. The book, Bill's Sportfishing Calendar and his Standup Fishing DVDs are for sale on his website and in most Southern California fishing stores. ■



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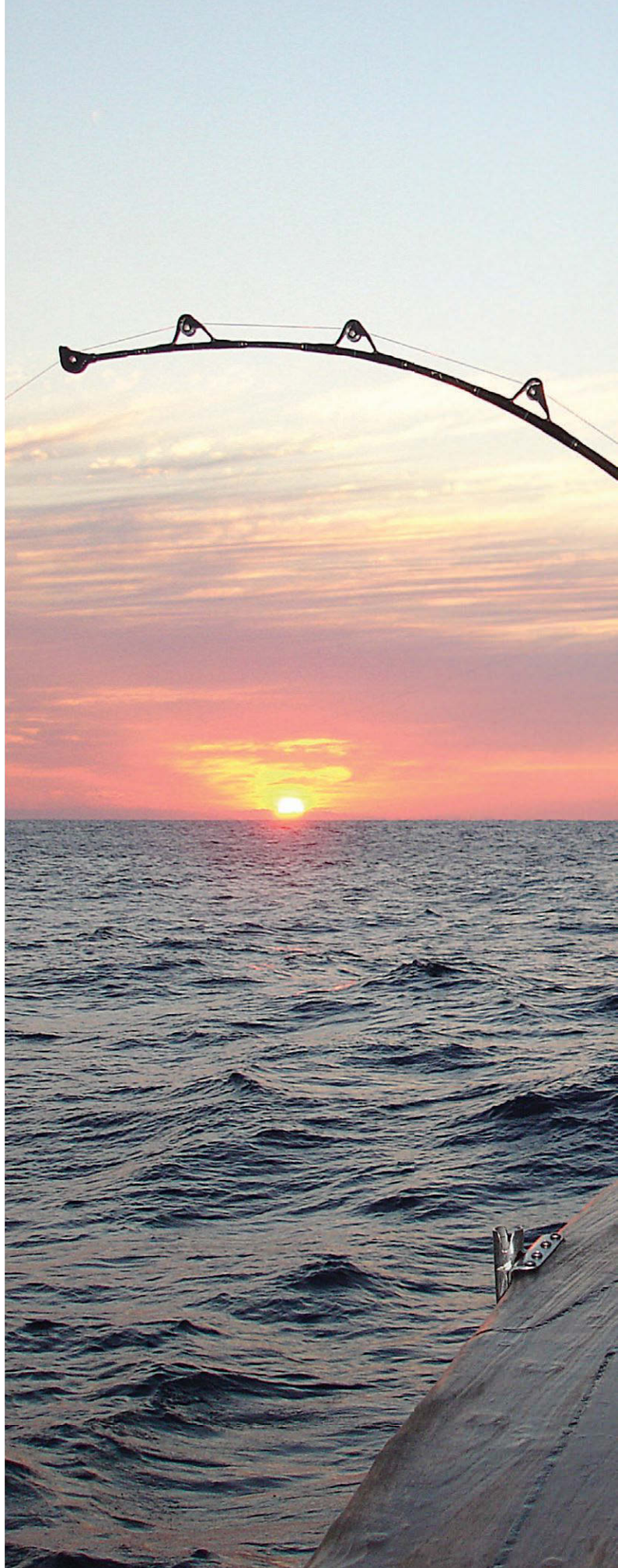
What to expect on a trip.

BY BILL ROECKER

Your time aboard a long-range boat isn't like it is on a day boat. No, sir. First and best, you'll sleep in a stateroom with one or two other anglers, not in bunk-room racks with 30 or more.

When you awake to fish will be up to you. Chefs (they're not cooks) are up around 5 a.m. or earlier to prepare breakfast, served at your table over a period of an hour or two. You might have eggs cooked to order. Breakfast includes coffee, tea, milk, cereal (including cooked oatmeal), fruit, biscuits, toast, bacon or sausage, hash browns, pancakes, French toast or something like omelets or Eggs Benedict. It won't be coffee, a burrito and a hustle to the rail—unless they're biting hard, and you're in a hurry.

Three meals and two snacks are served each day—standard. If you get off the boat lighter than you got on, the chefs will be disappointed. However, they'll accommodate special diets or a request for fish or vegetables in place of meat. Soda pop, bottled water, coffee, tea and beer are handy, hot or cold. There may be a charge for beer or pop on the honor system: sign a sheet when you take one. These things are explained during the first passenger seminar, shortly after leaving port, when safety procedures and gear are also described.





LONG-RANGE FISHING IS INCREDIBLY BEAUTIFUL AND EXCITING, as this shot from Excel Sportfishing shows. The fish are big, the scenery's glorious. Photos by Bill Roecker, FishingVideos.com

Preparation & Fun

Since you'll be fishing for days on a big comfortable boat, the pace is truly relaxed on the way to the first fishing grounds. However, if fishing is very good near port in summer or fall, the skipper may want to take a shot at fish just a few hours from the harbor.

Most often, there's time to prepare your tackle, tie wahoo leaders, service a reel (crew members can help), read a magazine or book, watch a movie in your stateroom or on the big screen in the galley, or just relax out of the wind on the upper deck. Long rangers are big, from 80 to 126 feet, so you won't be stepping on another angler every time you move.

The reason long rangers spend so much time and effort on tackle and rigging is revealed in Toni Lo Presti's online remark from *Royal Polaris* in December of 2014:

"We can only hope tuna fishing can come remotely close to what we've had the last few days with these wahoo. On another happy note, we should make much better time in the coming days after lightening the load a hundred pounds or so

from all the jigs we lost!"

Added to that was the capper, "Well worth it!"

Formerly the tackle shop manager and now a co-owner at Fisherman's Landing, Doug Kern suggests anglers "... must first be acutely aware that each and every trip will present different conditions. As such, different tackle, rigging, equipment and fishing methods will be needed for each trip. ... It's crucial for the long-range angler to gather as much quality and pertinent information as possible, and to plan tackle and other gear accordingly. A good long-range angler never forgets that each step leading up to a trip and the trip itself are supposed to be fun."

On the Boat

Having a wide stern and fewer anglers means less crowding at the rail (a must for dealing with multiple hookups on big fish), with room to move.

Jigcasting on long rangers is like it is on day boats: Do it forward of the bait tank, so you don't wind in bait fishermen on the square end. Jigcasting along the side, watch out for overhead deck lights when you swing

(a lesson I learned the wrong way).

A welcome shower and fresh clothes at the end of a fishing day leads to a fancy dinner in a comfortable booth. Sleeping in your air-conditioned stateroom is heavenly for tuckered fishermen. The boat may move at night, allowing more fishing time in daylight. Waking up in a new place, where fishing possibilities start before dawn, is exciting.

Cruising during the day, you'll be welcome in the wheelhouse when the skipper's not busy. Don't bother the skipper or crew when they have binoculars up to their eyes—they're on duty then. Otherwise, they have answers for fishing inquiries and will provide assistance if needed. Most skippers are cordial to passengers in the wheelhouse when they're just covering miles.

Long-range boats are long, wide fishing platforms carrying hundreds of scoops of live sardines and anchovies. Tackle, expert advice, a workshop, satellite phones, Wi-Fi and first aid are all available. Hundreds of gallons of fresh water are produced daily by reverse osmosis water-makers. Comfort and safety aboard are powerful reasons to fish long range.

It's a Seasonal Game

Fishing can be broadly categorized in two types: spring and summer. Summer fishing means rod-slamming action can be less than 30 miles or as much as 300 miles south of San Diego. From Colnett to Cedros and the San Benitos Islands and offshore, you may find very good fishing for yellowtail, yellowfin and bluefin tuna. The tuna in some bluefin schools may run well over a hundred pounds, bigeye as well. In 2015, 200-pound bluefin were both caught and speared near San Diego in July, so be prepared with some heavy gear. The summer game has changed.

Multi-day boats include long rangers and larger day boats and charters that stay out for up to a week or so. Two- to eight-day trips are offered in summer, with an occasional longer run. Generally

A JIGGED HURRICANE BANK WAHOO will bring a smile to any jigcaster's face, even if the fish misses by a hair.



speaking, that means they'll be making excursions of 50 to 450 miles from San Diego. Fall multi-day boats tap superior tuna fishing.

Super yellowtail fishing and excellent white seabass and kelp bass fishing at the San Benitos/Cedros archipelago, The Ridge and many other spots mean a 100-pound yellowfin tuna or a 60-pound yellowtail are always possible. If tuna are biting outside, your trip may stay offshore, trolling from one school to the next.

IN RECENT YEARS, BIG BLUEFIN HAVE REAPPEARED ON THE LONG-RANGE MENU; some of them in "local" waters. Long rangers go where the fishing's best.

No Experience Required

"An absolute novice can do well," asserted *Vagabond* skipper Mike Lackey, "because the crew will help. You don't even have to bring your own tackle. We have loaner tackle, too.

"Other anglers will help you, too. There's good camaraderie on the boats. Fishing is primary, but the whole experience is what it's about. Sightseeing, enjoying the variety of the passengers; we get everything from rocket scientists to hod carriers."

Skipper Buzz Brizendine came to San Diego from Oceanside many years ago and has been running his *Prowler* (Bill Poole's first purpose-built long ranger) for decades. Buzz has fished long range and has as much experience running one- and two-day trips as any man.

"I deal with lots of new anglers," he notes, "and for them I recommend monofilament line with a San Diego Knot to the hook. I use the John Collins Knot or the Albright to connect spectra to mono or fluorocarbon.

"I do like my anglers to use fluorocarbon, and when it's used with mono I go for the Uni to Uni Knot to connect them.

"To flyline with bait, I suggest 25- to 40-pound line and a sardine with a 2/0 to 4/0 hook. I use the nose hook for the most part."

All Day, All Night

You can fish at night. A particular Alijos Rocks trip was a whiz-banger for skipper Randy Toussaint and his *Royal Star* anglers.



"You know the fishing has been good," noted Toussaint, "when 25- to 40-pound yellowtail are biting full speed at 0400, and only three passengers get up to try for them. With limited effort, we still landed 53 throughout the night. Tuna fishing was a little slower today, but the overall grade was better. We ended up with 65 for the day, and I would say 70 percent were 50 to 80 pounds."

That trip's best was a typical Alijos 100-pound yellowfin, a sardine fish. You can handle such on a 4/0 hook and 40-pound line, but 50- or 60-pound would be much better. You might need any gear from 25- to 100-pound strength on a given trip.

Rods and reels used on short trips are as varied as the catch. If tuna were the only fish caught, an angler might bring a couple of rods and reels and have plenty of gear. But in spring/summer, kelp and reef species are included, and a major yellowtail bite could go off anytime, at the surface or 300 feet down.

Jig Fishing

You might need long and short jig sticks for 30- to 50-pound line class for surface and yoyo jigging. Use a trolling outfit of 60 to 100 pounds, and medium and heavy bait rigs in the 30- to 60-pound category.

CLIPPERTON ATOLL

The end of the line for San Diego sportboats is Clipperton Atoll, the eastern Pacific's only coral atoll. Late in February 2012, *Royal Star* owner-operator Tim Ekstrom took 23 anglers on a long, long-range trip to Clipperton, where tuna grow to very large sizes, unmolested, save for visiting tuna seiners and very occasional sport fishermen like Ekstrom's group. The *Star's* anglers found themselves surrounded by willing biters of all sizes, most with hungry, vicious dispositions.

"At the tail end of an absolutely insane stop that began on the giant bird school/foamer," wrote Ekstrom, "the photo shows anglers slugging it out on the bow during the same stop and one of the several over 200-pound yellowfin that was liberated after the boat was filled to capacity. I have to admit that even with a boat full of beautiful grade Clipperton yellowfin in the hatch this moment still pained me a bit. It was his lucky day.

"And to sweeten the occasion to an altitude of pure heaven, a log drifted in holding a huge ball of perfect cocineros and caballitos. It provided the opportunity to replenish our tanks with loads, numerous big brailers of perfect hook and chum baits. While we were still OK on bait, with plenty to make the remainder of the fishing time with confidence, there is nothing like loading the tanks with a huge bonus. Now we have a surplus. Who would have thought? But again, this is Clipperton; expect the unexpected.

"Photos for the day feature a quick shot I snapped from the bridge as we approached one of the logs a long while after the big bonanza had taken place. Even though the majority of the boobies sat down, there was still enough bait to keep the tuna fired up and foaming."



Most boats have plenty of rod space alongside the deckhouse and in rocket launchers forward of the tanks.

"I've seen a lot guys do well deep jigging yellowtail with a short rod of six or six and a half feet," said Andy Cates, *Red Rooster III* skipper. "It might take a few drifts, but you can be successful on yellowtail by using the yoyo method, especially when you're drifting over shallows.

"You can use a longer rod of seven to nine feet with the surface iron. When fish are up breezing, not biting close, you can reach 'em with the skip jig and the surface jig. We also had this experience at Clipperton Atoll, on bigger tuna. ... Rod length gets you a longer cast, and the action of the jig coming across the surface. Skip the jig for tuna, and wind it for the yellowtail, swimming the jig.

"A good skip or surface jig would be a Salas 7X or a Tady 45. The 7X is best

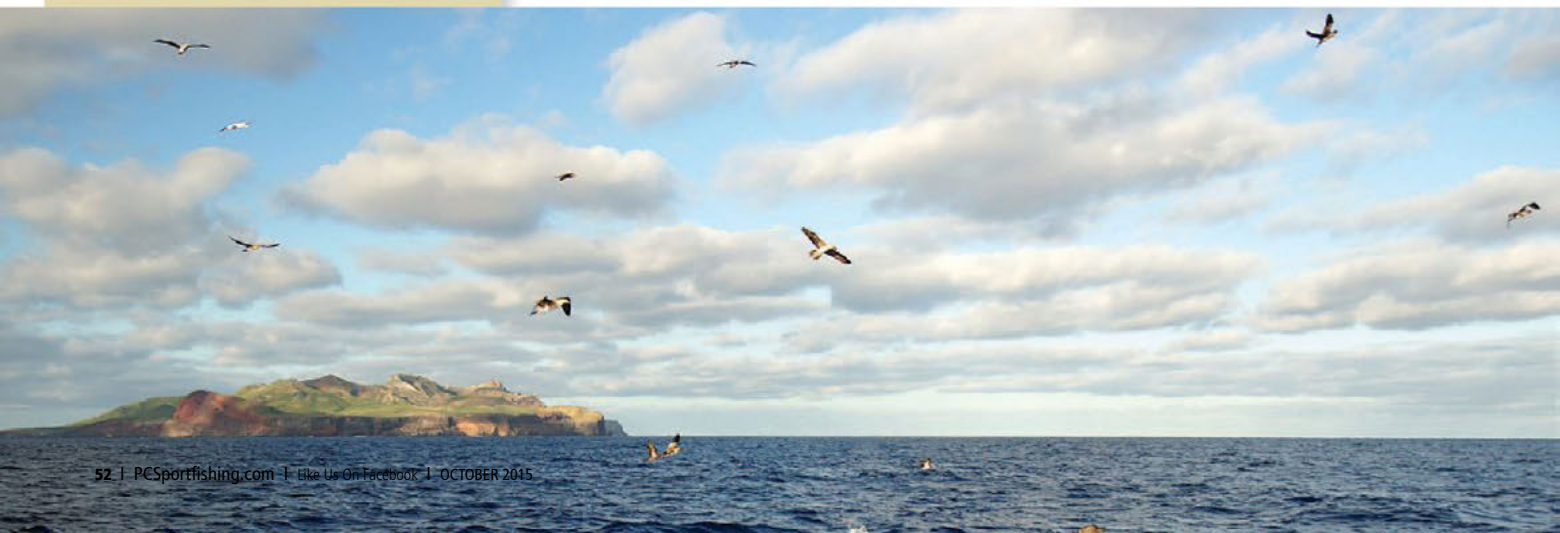
for tuna; the 45 best for yellowtail. When you cast either, when it hits the surface, put it in gear fast.

"For yoyo jigging yellowtail, I like blue and white and scrambled eggs in the 6X Jr. size. For deep-jigging tuna I like chrome, chrome and blue jigs, and the glow in the dark Tady 15 or all-white jigs."

**DAWN AT THE
SAN BENITOS
ISLANDS**
usually finds the
big yellowtail
who live there
on the bite.

Fall & Winter Fishing

During the months from October to May, boats fish the waters from Alijos Rocks and The Ridge to Cabo San Lucas, the Revillagigedos archipelago and even Clipperton Atoll on trips of 10 to 20-plus days. The fish sought are the apex of the food chain, tuna of 80 pounds up to 300 or more, and wahoo. On some trips no tuna under 100 pounds are kept.





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THE AUTHOR WITH A TYPICAL LONG RANGE YELLOWFIN TUNA. Not huge, maybe, but big enough to kick the author's butt on light tackle.

Baja coast, but the usual area is near Clarion Island and on the Hurricane Bank, far southwest of Cabo San Lucas. Trolling is for wahoo, but early all tuna come on bait.

When you're fishing more than two days from San Diego, down below Cedros Island, you need stout gear. You can use 30-pound line as your lightest gear, but most of the fishing will call for at least 40-pound topshots or mainline. Many winter long rangers use 150- or 200-pound spectra mainline, topshots or leaders. Most of the fishing is with

During warm water years, some winter fishing may be on the inside, off the

bait on hooks sized 4/0 to 8/0, but kite fishing and trolling also produce some fish, on bigger hooks.

I'm not kidding. Be prepared for tuna from 30 to 300 pounds or more. First-timers are well-advised to confer with the crew on the way south, so they're ready when the first stop for big boys comes up.

Burned into my own memory was a first stop when I mistakenly cast a sardine on 40-pound line into a spot of boiling tuna. They were 200 pounds, I learned shortly, as the last of that full reel whizzed out and snapped off at the spool's end. That sound and the look I got from the skipper standing next to me serve as permanent reminders of the need for proper gear.

RODS AND REELS

Six- to eight-foot bait rods with 25- to 40-pound line is what you need. Reels with gear ratios of 3-1 to 6-1 cover the speed range, and they could be sized from 2/0 to 6/0. If you have a favorite trolling rig, bring it. If not, the boat will have one for you to borrow.

If you're a jig caster, bring your favorite stick; this may be a fine opportunity to throw surface iron at crashing tuna, or yoyo heavy iron for oversize yellowtail.

Hooks and sinkers: Bait hooks of size 4 to 6/0 will cover most situations and baits. Sinkers can be torpedo types of one to eight ounces, and slip sinkers of a quarter ounce to two ounces.

Lures: Three- to nine-inch trolling feathers and plastic-skirted jigs, trolling plugs, plastic baits, and surface and sinking iron jigs are among the best bets.

Bring a few bait-making gangions.

Side cutters in a sheath, boots and a rod belt are necessary. Comfort items such as sunglasses, sandals, sunscreen, hat and warm jacket are strongly advised. A book can help non-fishing time pass, but many passengers use off-hours to just relax or nap.

At the trip's end, you can have your tuna processed and shipped, or you can trade for canned albacore or give your fish to charity, or pack it home for canning or freezing.

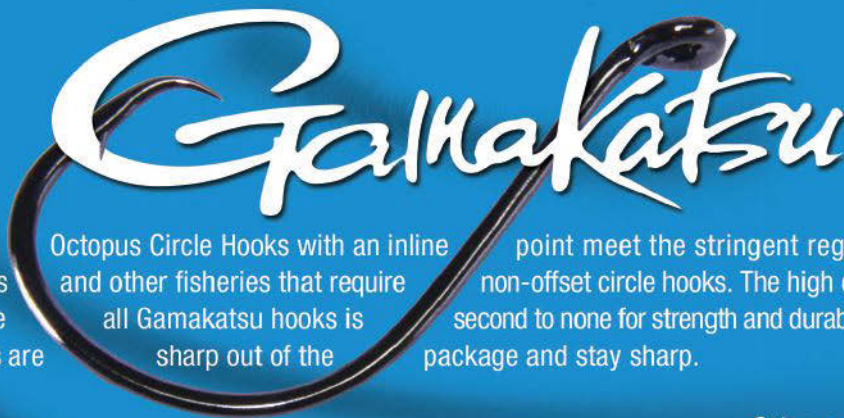
Tip: Angles Fight Giant Yellowfin

"Use the angles, use the leverage against the big fish," says Accurate's Jack Nilsen as he plays a big one in my video, *Driftfishing Big Tuna*. "You can't beat the fish; the fish has to beat himself. You just have to be patient, let it happen, keep your adrenaline rush down and let the fish do what it does best, and that's fight for size.

"When the rod straightens out a little bit you get one or two turns on the reel handle. Get what you can. Let it load up and when it straightens



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TIME & TACKLE

Owner-skipper Randy Toussaint says, "Most of *Royal Star's* summer trips are perfect for the first-timer, because of the extended time on the water. On a day boat, you might only get a few hours at the rail. Here, you've got a good, big crew and plenty of time. Fishing may be on the anchor or offshore and you can really learn something. We suggest anglers bring gear to accommodate the bigger bluefin and big yellowfin. But if you don't have it, we can supply it. We have our own rental gear."

Says Bill Cavanaugh, *Intrepid* second skipper, "I'm looking for any advantage I can get. For my spectra to mono or fluorocarbon connections I like the Loop to Loop or the Uni to Uni knots. I like fluorocarbon because I think it gives an advantage. To tie to the hook with 30- to 50-pound, I use the San Diego Knot. For heavier line I go to the Trilene Knot."

"When it comes to hooking a bait, I like shoulder-hooking sardines. I think it makes a better presentation. The hook tends to lay down flat so it's less visible. I try to make my gear match the situation."



THE FOOD ON A LONG RANGER CAN BE AS PRETTY AS THE SCENERY. How about a helping of wahoo and baby yellowtail in a mango sauce?

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out, get another one. You don't have to think about it, just get one at a time, that's plenty.

"Keep a bend in the rod, let the rod do what it's designed to do. It's a shock absorber."

Jack is a firm believer in saving just a little bit of your energy for the end of the fight, when you're gasping and the deckhand asks you to lift one more time so the prize can be gaffed. That's smart advice.

Bill Roecker owns FishingVideos.com, where he posts daily reports from the long-range fleet and other sources, and Oceanic Productions, which published his book At The Rail: Long Range Fishing. The book, Bill's Sportfishing Calendar and his Standup Fishing DVDs are for sale on his website and in most Southern California fishing stores.



SMALL YELLOWFIN THAT WOULD BE KEPT ON A DAY BOAT are nearly always released on a long ranger. Next year this tuna will be twice its present size, and the next ...



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TOM DELGADO PLANNING HIS NEXT MEAL with a couple tasty lobsters.



These bugs were taken in 40 feet of water using sardine baited tubes. The sardines work well as they are very oily and the scent travels well.

Over the past 10 years, we have seen hoop netting for California's spiny lobster turn into a real sport with its following and players expanding every year. Thus, with the expanded pressure, anglers have had to find new areas to set up for the tasty "bugs."

Recreational anglers get only five or six days to fish before the commercial fleet is turned loose. This year's opener for California is slated for Oct. 3 at 12:01 a.m. Weather permitting, these first few days are the best time to get the fresh ocean bugs before they are quickly thinned out by the abundance of commercial traps.

This is my favorite time of the season as limits are often reached in relatively short order. When the surf is small we get in close to fish the reefs. Still, you need to use caution as we sometimes have sleeper sets of waves that put us close to danger.

Certainly this is not a game to play in a larger vessel where you might put your crew in danger. In fact, it's really not for the light of heart and the last thing you want to do is put your crew at risk. Research your tides and try to fish through a slack from a couple hours before to a couple hours after. The bugs come out and crawl better during this tidal phase.

BY CAPT. BOB WOODARD

How often do I check my nets?

This question comes up often and is certainly open for debate. For sure, I have heard many theories. As a guideline, if you are fishing a full string of 10 hoops and don't rush your check, by the time you get through your gear and take a quick five minute break you should be ready to go again. Total time between checking the same hoop is 45 minutes to an hour and that's plenty.

Always check your gear by approaching into the current to keep the line clear of the prop. We grab the buoy moving about two knots so by the time the boat stops we are directly vertical on top of the hoop and pulling at speed. You can leave the conical traps a little longer between soaks and the only downside I have seen with the conical trap is that bugs that are not all the way in will fall off during the pull and the really big bugs just don't fit in very well. I have had a 10-pound bug fall off a conical right at the boat and even though we would have released it, a photo would have been nice. I normally use about five of each style trap.

The key with any is to sneak up on the net and don't put any pressure on the rope until you are ready to fast



KALE'A WOODARD LENDS A HAND TO TOM DELGADO while hooping off Point Loma. Hooping is great fun for the kids.

pull all the way to the boat. I have seen it more times than I would have liked that the puller hits the side of the boat with the trap, losing or potentially losing lobsters as the hoop reaches the boat.

To avoid this mistake, mark each of your ropes 10 feet from the trap so you can pull fast and know when to reach out over the side and avoid the hull contact.

There are some hoop pullers available that set in rod holders. My only concern with them is you would have to be fast and careful for the bugs not to feel the line movement while you are putting it in

the puller and bail out, although it's not as crucial while using the conical traps.

Where to set up?

Fact is, when it comes to "where" to place your hoops, it changes throughout the season. We often find good fishing in the shallows early in the season, especially before the commercial guys start up. Weather permitting, I fish shallow that first week or two and will stay tight until the fishing warrants deeper water.

We usually find the deeper water will produce later in the year when the crowd thins. That's when we try out 40-60 feet on sand that has some structure near it.

Keep your eye out on the meter for rocks that are near your harbor that perhaps have not been found by the commercial boats. Even one small rock can yield you some nice open water bugs so mark those on your GPS and keep an eye out after the season begins to see if there are any commercial traps on. One of these could turn into your secret cache.

When fishing a bay, breakwater or otherwise heavily congested area, don't get all spread out. If you get there early and spread your traps way out you will surely get set on, or in between. Give yourself a reasonable space between traps but don't take so much turf that others will drop on you. Fifty feet between traps is plenty and gives you 500 feet to work with if you are running 10 traps.

That is more than enough to get the job done if you are in a good area.

THE AUTHOR DISPLAYS A NICE LOBSTER taken off the Zuniga Jetty in San Diego.

Bait cage options

The old school, black plastic-coated metal square bait cages are all but obsolete. These days the seals have tripled in population and will not leave them alone. Bat rays and other creatures will also interfere with the bugs reaching their mark while using these cages.

Same with the old trick of zip tying the salmon heads or rockfish heads to your hoop. More often than not the seals will get you. About 10 years ago I saw a sample of a homemade PVC tube that had holes drilled in it. My friend who was using it was having problems with the



seals at the time, and said it worked great. The seals would just leave after they figured out they could not get any food from it.

These are simple to make and cheap and there are even some versions that are coming into the retail market. You can buy everything you need at Home Depot if you choose to make your own and if you make 10 your cost will be down around \$3-\$4 each.

Take a piece of 1 1/2- or 2-inch inch PVC and cut to your preferred length (approximately 14-16 inches) and glue a cap on one end with PVC glue. Drill holes with a 3/8-inch drill bit throughout the tube and you are set. Zip tie the tube in the center bottom of your trap before you bait it. There is really no need to put a cap on the other end. I have seen it done but it's really overkill.

Take a glue-on cap without glue and place it lightly on the other end after baiting it. If you push it on hard you will have a battle getting it off at the end of the night. The tubes expand a bit with water and will hold tight just fine. Trust me on this one or you will find yourself with a hammer and chisel trying to get it apart. It is much nicer to pull it off and dump your bait while you are still on the water. I believe this is the best bait holder for the job and the only thing I use anymore.



BACK IN BY 10:30 P.M. WITH A NICE HAUL Greg Noll left and the author display their catch.



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Weights and kelp

The stock, round hoop nets come in two sizes. The larger one is your better option as you cover more ground and will flip out fewer of the bugs that are investigating your bait offerings. The thing with these hoops is they are very light and often swept away by current and kelp. Even if you do find the trap, you are not fishing if your hoop is moving.

I have seen many ways to add weight to these hoops so they stay put. The easiest is to zip tie three 12- to 16-ounce torpedo sinkers to the inside edge of the hoop. The reason for the inside edge is to minimize snags as added weight means more bottom/snag contact.

Should that happen you will likely tear the net or even worse—lose it. We do the same thing to the conical traps

with the weights on the inside of the bottom ring.

With a hoop and all attached gear you will have between \$60 -\$100 invested, so losing them is no fun.

The other thing that will wreak havoc is the loose kelp in the area as it drifts with the current. It will stick to your floats and drag them down as well as carry your traps out of position. Try to stay out of these heavy kelp flow areas, but if you must fish them, pay lots of attention to your gear using lights, binoculars and GPS waypoints.

Also be prepared for the fog to move in. If you do this enough times the fog will eventually come. That's another great reason to mark each trap on GPS or at least your first and last traps if they are in line. Having numbers on your buoys is another way to make sure you have not lost or bypassed a hoop.

Floats and lights

Have sufficient floats that will not easily be dragged under. I prefer two back-to-back lobster floats creating the shape of a bullet in either direction, further helping to shed kelp and other debris in the current. Take a look at how the commercial guys set their floats. They are professionals and there is a reason for the way they do it. Don't go cheap on your floats. No plastic bottles or miscellaneous floats in a hodgepodge manner that will surely collect the kelp and sail your little lobster collection device away to sea.

There are an abundance of lights available today that will help you keep tabs on your gear. Light sticks are an option and can be used more than once if put in the freezer at the end of the night. Any light is better than none, but try to stay consistent with your whole line.

JOHN WILSON SEEN HERE MEASURING A SPINY LOBSTER.

Notice the PVC tube used for bait as discussed in the article.



**FAMOUS BIG WAVE SURFER
AND FORMER COMMERCIAL
FISHERMAN GREG NOLL** seen here
with the author making a fun night of it
off Point Loma.



Don't do it

A couple other things must be considered. One, don't feed the seals. I have seen this many times where a small group of boats will be working an area virtually seal free, then one of the boats decides to change out their bait cages and the seals find the whole group.

Once fed, these seals will stick with you and those around you for hours. Keep an empty bucket on deck if you are changing out bait and throw it in there. If you want to get rid of it, run well out away from your fishing zone to dump it. Even when using the PVC bait tubes, the seals can dramatically affect your catch numbers as the bugs just don't like to crawl around when the "dogs" are swirling around.

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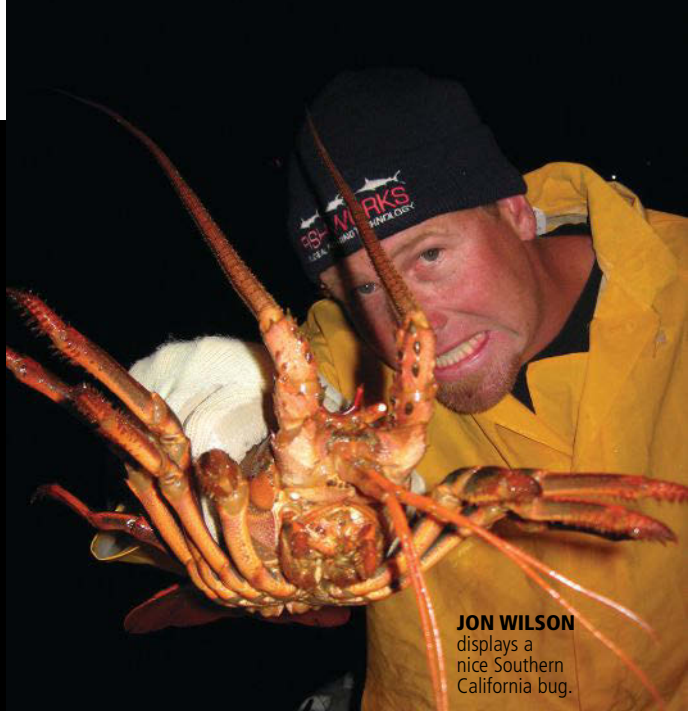
ONE NIGHT'S TAIL

Around 9:30 on Monday night, Sept. 29, 2014, 26-year-old diver Brendan Dirks was out with friends off Dana Point, in an area called The Headlands, where he spotted a huge lobster. A wrestling match ensued that resulted in cut hands and a ripped wetsuit. The giant bug was brought to shore and nicknamed "Larry the Lobster" by the group.

"Larry" weighed in at 15 pounds, 9 ounces, just shy of the California record set back in 1968 at Catalina. After consulting some local researchers, Brendan decided the right thing to do was to release the lobster. As with all species, these bigger models have a huge impact in the breeding patterns and can help create tens of thousands of small lobsters.

Another thing to keep in mind if you catch a big one: Shellfish do not shed toxins as well as other species, and research shows they can retain heavy metals and mercury. With this said, my favorite lobster meal is that of a legal-sized lobster, not much bigger. This is especially relevant for those fishing in big bays such as San Diego and Long Beach that have extensive traffic of big ships and naval boatyards.

So if you see Larry out there, say hello for me, take a quick photo and let him get back to reproducing!



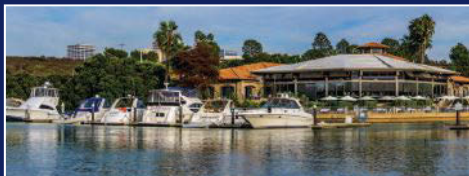
JON WILSON
displays a
nice Southern
California bug.

Don't get caught with short bugs. The Department of Fish and Wildlife takes the lobster measurements seriously and so should you. If you work hard you will get your share of legal bugs. Don't push the limits. Make sure all your bugs are at or over the legal size of 3 1/4 inches and each angler must have his or her own measuring device.

In addition to your sportfishing license you will need a spiny lobster report card. On this card you

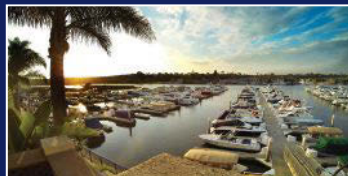


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must identify the area fished, the types of traps and the number of lobster retained on each date fished. At the end of the season you must return the card to Fish and Wildlife via mail or you can go online and submit it there. If you do not return your card you will be paying an additional \$20 for your next year's lobster card.

Last year's legal limit was seven lobster per person per night. As always these rules change and are amended by the agency so always check their website for current regulations or modifications. The minimum size limit for recreational fishermen is 3 1/4 inches, measured in a straight line on the midline of the back from the rear edge of the eye socket to the rear edge of the body shell.



FUN FACTS

In 1968, a 16-pound, 1-ounce lobster was procured at Catalina Island. Weight of the state record for a California spiny lobster caught in sport diving: **15 pounds, 9 ounces**. Brendan Dirks and friends subdued "Larry the Lobster" off Dana Point, weighed him and then released him.

Some researchers believe the giant bugs can reach more than 25 pounds. Estimated lifespan of California spiny lobster for both male and females: **About 50 years.**

Estimated number of recreational lobster fisherman in the state that take nearly half of the annual catch: **27,000-32,500.**

Depth that lobsters are known to descend to, especially in the winter months: **240 feet.**



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WHO'S WHO AND WHO'S WINNING ON THE PACIFIC COAST SPECIAL TO PCS tournament lines



DAY ONE OF THE 56TH ANNUAL HAWAIIAN INTERNATIONAL BILLFISH TOURNAMENT (HIBT) officially got under way.
Photo by Gary Graham

2015 Make A Wish Tuna Challenge Results

The extraordinary fishing of 2015 continued for the Make A Wish Tuna Challenge. Ninety-two boats with 412 anglers (including 35 lady anglers and 18 junior anglers) fished a wide swath of water from south of the border to west of San Clemente Island.

Recorded were 84 yellowfin tuna to 62 pounds, 50 dorado to 25 pounds and 12 bluefin tuna to 43 pounds.

The top overall team was the crew from the *Mi Panga* (Nick Smith, Brandon Nelson, Erik Nelson and Darren Pasalich), who headed to the 43 and decked nine yellowfin from 50-60 pounds and earned Tuna Challenge championship jackets with a team total of 236.6 points for their top four fish. Brandon Nelson caught the biggest of the bunch at 62.2 pounds and was awarded the Richard Thomas Memorial Grand Prize, earning a trip to the Grand Alaska Lodge.

Mike Muehl of the *Baja Viking* took home first place in the Larger Boat division with a 56.2-pound yellowfin. The Smaller Boat division was taken by the team of *E Fish N Sea* (Billy Treviranus, Rick Gaskins and Eric McCully) with their three yellowfin earning 155.60 points and first and second place angler awards for Eric and Rick as well as championship jackets for the team.

The High Lady Angler award was taken by Judy Hirsch on the *Green Bee* with a 47.4-pound yellowfin, which picked her up a \$500 gift card to Nordstrom courtesy of Izorline International.

A 25-pound bull dorado took home the top prize for Matthew Genovese on the *Reel Medicine* and the largest yellowtail of 12.2 pounds was taken by Rich Truffa on the *Helen C*. Both were entered into the dorado and yellowtail side pots and their boats took home \$500 each in addition to their prizes.

Of interest, Lawrence Duffin, last year's Richard Thomas Grand Prize winner on the *Finology*, hooked a swordfish on 50-pound while flying the kite near the Mackerel Bank until it decided to free itself after 20 minutes. All of the large yellowfin taken in the tournament were caught near the 43 on the kite, live sardines and chunk baits while fighting off the large contingent of hammerhead sharks that have congregated there. Two boats fished west of San Clemente and got into some of the outstanding bluefin fishing, averaging fish from 35 to 43 pounds.

The biggest winner of the tournament, of course, was the Make A Wish Foundation of San Diego. After hearing wish kid Travis talk about his wonderful fishing exploits, the Make A Wish Tuna Challenge committee, host Silver Gate Yacht Club, volunteers, sponsors and generous anglers are pleased to announce that a total of \$215,000+ was raised toward granting wishes to children with life threatening illnesses.

Team ArooRoo Takes SWBA Elite Championship

Salt Water Bass Anglers capped off its 2015 season in Long Beach on Aug. 29-30 with the Elite Championship. Sponsored by Abu Garcia and Taco Surf, this two-day event pitted the top 20 teams in the field against one another in a format that required them to fish inside of Long Beach Harbor on day one and allowed them to fish anywhere they liked on day two. The rules on both days allowed anglers to combine any of the three species of bass for a five-fish bag with a minimum size of 14.25 inches.

Expectations were high on day one as Long Beach Harbor

had produced big bags for several teams during the 2014 finale. With a 5:45 a.m. start time, the teams had time to run to their preferred areas and get some fishing in before the sun broke the horizon. Those lucky enough to land on fish early were thankful as the bite dwindled dramatically after sunrise.

The consensus among anglers waiting to weigh their fish was that the day had been an absolute grind. Apparently the combination of a full moon, a huge tide swing, crystal-clear water and oppressive heat made for tough fishing. When everyone had weighed in only three had managed to break the 10-pound mark.

Team Ballast Point Brewing (Matt Moyer and Nic Dragomire) brought 10.31 pounds to the scale and sat in third place going into day two. Coming off their win at the final regular season event, Team LK Lures (Brian Sanner and Kerry Peeler) weighed 13.09 pounds for second place. The leaders going into day two was Team ArooRoo (Andy Wright and Matt Kim); their 13.15-pound bag was enough for the day one mega bag side pot and their

4.54-pound sand bass took down the big fish award for the day.

With a small craft advisory in effect for the outer waters, the tournament directors were forced to put San Clemente and Santa Barbara Islands off limits but allowed teams to make the run to Catalina. About half of the field decided to make the run across, leaving the rest to scatter along the beach in search of calicos or sand bass. The weather remained a factor all day and teams that made the crossing to Catalina reported having trouble finding areas that weren't too rough to fish. While things were calmer along the coast, a big swell made for sketchy fishing in some of the shallow zones along the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

Despite the challenging conditions there were a lot more smiles in the weigh-in line as most teams experienced good fishing. When the combined weights had been totaled, team LK Lures had slipped from second to third place with their 18.80-pound bag of sand bass giving them a two day total of 31.89 pounds.

The always dangerous Team Hammer

(Benny Florentino and Keith Michael) brought a 22.87-pound bag of Palos Verdes calicos to the scales that when combined with their fifth place bag from day one totaled 32 pounds.

But in the end Team ArooRoo was able to not only defend their day one lead but to bring the heaviest weight to the scales on day two as well. Their 23.98-pound bag of Catalina calicos gave them a total of 37.13 pounds. Between the win and day one and two side pots, Team ArooRoo took down an impressive \$2,990 in cash along with product from Abu Garcia and Kaenon Sunglasses.

56th HIBT Dazzles with Record-breaking Numbers

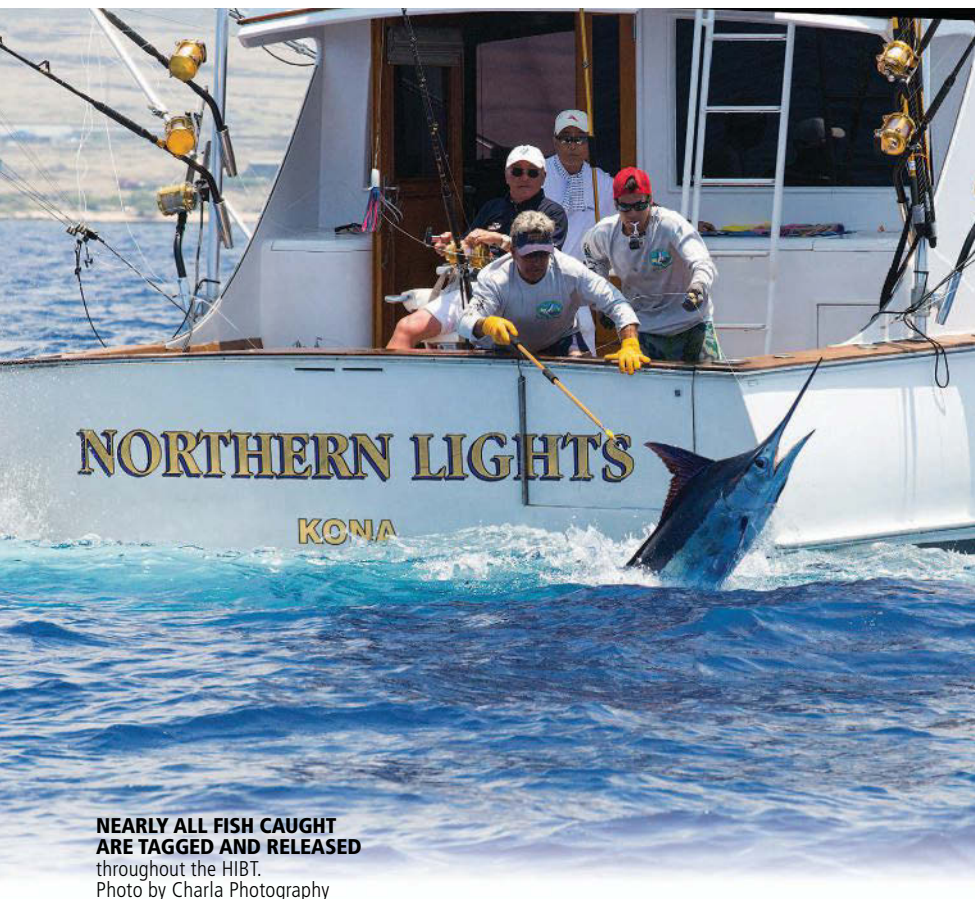
In 1959, Hawaii became the 50th state, automobiles had larger fins than some of the fish caught, and a much younger Peter Fithian founded the Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament in Kona, Hawaii. Offering competitive fishing in the Olympic spirit, the tournament was open to worldwide anglers competing for medals, honor and prestige.

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**NEARLY ALL FISH CAUGHT
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throughout the HIBT.

Photo by Charla Photography

Each year since the first, teams begin arriving early; some pre-fish and others just simply kick back and enjoy what Kona has to offer. By the weekend preceding the week of the intense competition, the festivities get under way with a busy schedule of registration, boat drawing, captains meeting and opening ceremonies, all opportunities for anglers to renew friendships and look over the competing teams.

The Class of 2015 included 31 international teams from around the globe. Seven teams from Japan, six teams from Australia, three teams from New Zealand, two each from Africa and China joined teams from Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and the nine U.S. teams (including two from Hawaii).

Day one of the 56th annual Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament (HIBT) officially began with the legendary call to "Start fishing! Start fishing! Start fishing!" that always begins the five-day fishing marathon. Nearly all fish caught are tagged and released throughout the tournament.

Fithian observed after the scales had closed on day one that 36 fish added points to team totals, "making this the *best* first day of Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament

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fishing in over a decade.”

He was just as thrilled the next day, noting that 27 of 31 teams had already posted points on the scoreboard “and we’ve only just completed day two of fishing. With so many fish taking the bait, any team could pull ahead in the days to come.”

On day three, 29 of 31 teams posted points and several teams were within striking distance of the top spot on the HIBT leader board. Though the third day’s catch was smaller in number than the first two days, 13 fish were tagged and released, including a boated, 408-pound Pacific blue marlin and a boated ahi (yellowfin tuna).

Day four teams succeeded in tagging and releasing another 16 Pacific blue marlin and one spearfish. Claire Duke, Gold Coast Game Fish Club angler, fishing aboard *Vixen*, caught and boated the largest ahi of the week to that point, tipping the scales at an impressive 191 pounds.

Team Likeke Club hit the leader board in second place on day two, grabbed the top spot on day three and didn’t let go.

“Tears were streaming down my face as we pulled into Kailua Pier on the final day,” said Rich Wilson, this year’s HIBT champion. “I was the youngest HIBT angler back in the ‘60s. We moved away, but I never lost my passion for HIBT fishing.

“I was told I wouldn’t make another Christmas and I knew I had to come back,” he continued. “And we gave it one last hurrah!” Australia’s Sunshine Coast Game Fishing Club took second place followed by Japan’s Kona Game Fishing Club-Kusatsu. *Illusions*, captained by Tim Hicks with crew members Chris Kam and Jordan Kilkenny, was the top boat scoring the highest number of points over the five days of tournament fishing. “This was a memorable year at the 56th annual Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament,” marveled Fithian, who founded the event and has served as tournament director for all of them. “All 31 teams and every charter boat in the fleet put points on the board. I’d say that is pretty close to perfect.”

The 57th HIBT is scheduled for July 30-Aug. 7, 2016. ■

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AX8 enables captains to spot problems before they lead to breakdowns and potentially costly repairs. For added safety, the AX8 features programmable alarms for detecting temperature anomalies that can indicate potential fire, water leaks or damaged hoses. The AX8 also features FLIR's exclusive MSX technology, which adds edges, text and other details of visible imagery to the thermal imagery, allowing boaters to easily interpret what they are looking at.

With the growth of AIS target tracking, keeping track of multiple AIS targets in crowded waterways can be a challenge even for the most experienced captains. With LightHouse Collision Avoidance tools, both expert and novice captains can now monitor potential dangerous crossing situations with easy-to-interpret, on-screen graphics, called target interception zones. These zones can also help commercial and first responder vessels track and rendezvous with designated AIS targets. In addition, the latest LightHouse II version brings improved AIS target icons and user interface improvements.

Boaters can now upgrade Raymarine LightHouse II MFDs and connected peripherals by downloading the latest upgrades directly from Raymarine using Wi-Fi. LightHouse II also can deliver software updates to Raymarine autopilots, sonars, instruments and radars, making it easier than ever to keep up-to-date with the latest FLIR and Raymarine technology.

LightHouse II Release 15 is available in the form of a free download on raymarine.com. To learn more about Raymarine LightHouse II visit www.flir.com/marine.

Offered at \$1,199 MSRP, the AX8 Marine Thermal Monitoring System was made available in September.

Simrad NSO/NSS EVO2 Multifunction Navigators Compatible with C-MAP MAX-N+

Global electronic chart provider C-MAP by Jeppesen has announced an available software update for Simrad Evo2 Multifunction Displays (MFDs), making them compatible with C-MAP MAX-N+ 2015 cartography. This update brings an exciting new charting option to users of the highly popular NSO/NSS EVO2 MFDs. The update is now available at no cost to owners of these advanced navigation systems.

The new compatibility with C-MAP MAX-N+ 2015 cartography brings a range of proven C-MAP 4D chart content and advanced features to these navigation systems. For example, avid saltwater anglers running compatible Simrad systems will benefit from Jeppesen's leading library of High-Resolution Bathymetric (HRB) bottom contour data, now included with MAX-N+ 2015 Local and Wide charts. These detailed contour charts help fishermen effectively target underwater pinnacles, ledges, depressions and other "structure" widely known to concentrate baitfish and predatory gamefish. An added feature allows users to select Custom Shaded Depths making it easy for boaters to distinguish different water areas, whether traveling or fishing.

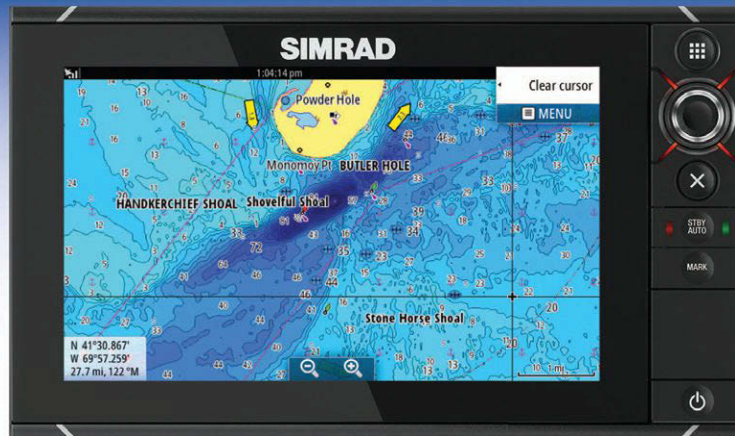
In addition, Jeppesen's exclusive Sport Fishing Data provides anglers with a wealth of useful information on wrecks and reefs, including composition, depth/orientation and other details. The Sport Fishing Data in MAX-N+ 2015 also features color Fish ID photos, localized sportfishing rules and regulations and state angling records, putting important, regional knowledge at every angler's fingertips.

C-MAP MAX-N+ 2015 provides Simrad users with a wealth of important features developed for safe, efficient navigation, including a world-leading database of high-resolution satellite imagery for coastal areas. Jeppesen's Harbor and Approach Details, worldwide database of Marina/Port Plans and detailed aerial photos of harbor

entrances, channels and inlets provide important local knowledge and enhanced situational awareness for cruisers and fishermen.

MAX-N+ 2015's Dynamic Raster Charts are another important feature for cruisers and all boaters who prefer the look of traditional paper nautical charts. Included with each MAX-N+ 2015 title, these charts combine a traditional appearance with the unique ability to "open up" and view information on a variety of important chart objects, such as NavAids or hazards.

In addition, Jeppesen's leading coverage of Bahamian waters—including special charts developed using trusted Bahamas Explorer and Wavey Line data—make C-MAP MAX-N+ 2015 a powerful cartography choice for the legions of sailors, cruisers and fishermen who visit this popular region.



Another key MAX-N+ 2015 feature, Dynamic Tides & Currents, has important applications for both boating and fishing. This information helps anglers time their fishing trips to take advantage of the best tidal currents over shoals, rips and points. This feature is also very important to cruisers to navigate safely through tidal channels or when entering tricky inlets or crossing dangerous bars.

C-MAP MAX-N+ 2015 Local or Wide charts can be purchased through Jeppesen

dealers worldwide on pre-programmed micro SD cards, or online through the Navico GoFree website at www.gofreemarine.com.

MAX-N+ 2015 Wide charts provide extensive coverage areas and retail for \$299. MAX-N+ 2015 Local charts provide large coverage for

most fishing and boating applications for only \$199.

To use new C-MAP MAX-N+ 2015 cartography, owners of Simrad NSO EVO2 MFDs must first update to Software Version 4.0. Fishermen and boaters who want to run C-MAP MAX-N+ 2015 charts in their Simrad NSS EVO2 MFDs need to obtain a free online update to Software Version 3.0 for their systems. Both are available through the Simrad website at www.simrad-yachting.com. ■



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NOAA Study on Value of Local Bait Shops

What if your local brick and mortar, bait and tackle shop shut down and so did those in your neighboring communities? You'd be left with big-box stores with their less-than-complete (for local fishing) tackle selections and often staffs with limited knowledge of local fishing. Your other option would be impersonal online stores where basically you just order product.

Tackle shop owners and employees worry about the percentage of consumers willing to let the stores die in order to save a few bucks online or in big-box stores, yet who go into their local tackle shop to ask questions on handle reels and rods which they then buy elsewhere. That just frosts tackle shop owners and staff who spend their professional time with the person to answer questions. Tackle shops have higher overhead than online stores and must charge slightly more to provide the physical store, great service and local knowledge.

The real value of local tackle shops is related to things like local and current fishing information, a selection of the right tackle and baits, rod repairs, reel service and repairs, spooling fresh line and teaching the right knots to tie topshots or make other splices, and one veteran anglers appreciate: a place to hang out and share stories and techniques with like-minded folks.

Local tackle shops are great resources and places to hang out, deserving of your loyalty and support. If anglers slow down their spending there, a great resource dies. These businesses are not getting wealthy. It is a lifestyle business.

Customer service—upfront and personal—as well as knowledge are the

cornerstone of local tackle shops. You can walk in and find out where the best yellowtail, white seabass or salmon bite happened yesterday. You can find out where the striped bass are going off. You can get the scoop on local shore and pier fishing. Local tackle shops are the information bases anglers share in.

The economic health of the brick and mortar bait and tackle industry is something that the Fisheries Service of the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA-Fisheries) worries about because some managers there really get it. They wanted to better understand how vitally important tackle shops are to local fishing communities. So, they did a serious study using 2013 data and it recently came out, detailing the economic stats of tackle shops in U.S. coastal communities alone.

There are more than 3,500 independent bait and tackle shops around the U.S. coasts alone (not counting the many thousands of inland shops). Collectively they achieve \$850 million in sales of marine bait, tackle and equipment, and they employ more than 1,600 people (not counting shop owners).

I'm sure there are some economists among the PCS readership, so for you (and you know who you are!) the report offers the following details:

1) Total sales impacts by sectors ...

37 percent Marine Bait and Tackle Retailers; 27 percent Services;

14 percent Manufacturing;

11 percent Retail and Wholesale Trade; 11 percent Other Industries.

2) Total jobs by sector ... 48 percent

Marine Bait and Tackle Retailers;

27 percent Services; 4 percent

Manufacturing; 10 percent Retail

and Wholesale Trade; 11 percent

Other Industries.

Remember, these are just coastal shops and the numbers do not include the vast number of tackle shops in inland communities across America.

Along the West Coast alone, NOAA found that independent bait and tackle shops had \$96.5 million in bait and

(Conclusions and opinions are those of the columnist and not necessarily those of Pacific Coast Sportfishing magazine.)

tackle and related equipment sales. These sales supported \$209 million in total economic output, including \$70 million in income and supported 1,678 full- and part-time jobs.

Those are very impressive numbers and serve as a baseline to help describe the role independent bait and tackle retailers play in local economies. These results will inform decision-making on how proposed fishing regulation changes might affect our society and economy.

"We at NOAA Fisheries are very excited about this study, which demonstrated that recreational anglers are purchasing a lot of their bait and tackle from local brick and mortar retailers, thus supporting coastal economies and the resiliency of coastal communities," says Dr. Cliff Hut, the NOAA's lead author on the study's excellent final report and who oversaw its execution. "Supporting tackle shops with your purchases of rods, reels and tackle, plus getting your old rods fixed and your reels serviced, repaired and spooled with fresh line is what can keep the coastal economies strong and resilient."

"Another reason why local tackle shops are so vital to their communities and to us is because they help distribute information and materials directly to anglers," adds Craig Heberer, Recreational Fisheries coordinator for NOAA, West Coast Region. "That helps us keep anglers informed."

An angler who goes into a local bait and tackle shop, asks questions and accepts advice from the shop owner, manager and knowledgeable staff, buys the gear recommended for local fishing and employs the terminal tackle and fishing techniques recommended, will discover the real value of local bait and tackle shops in the number of fish caught and the overall great experience.

Big-box stores and online giants cannot compete, other than by trying to woo you with a few dollars of savings. Having the right stuff, knowing where to go and how to fish is worth way more than a few saved bucks. Shop at your local tackle shop for best results. ■

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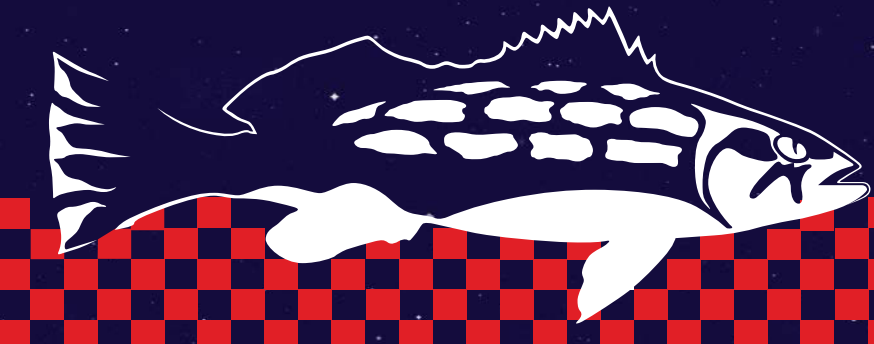


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Santa Barbara Island

Santa Barbara Island (SBI) is small, somewhat nondescript, a bit triangular in shape and rounded in profile from the constant weathering of wind and waves. It's located far enough offshore to just about straddle the dividing line between the relatively tame inner waters and the rugged real-world weather offshore. Without any completely protected anchorages, many boaters find the lack of comfort and facilities a deterrent.

Personally, I love it out there!

I first looked longingly at SBI back in the '60s from the heaving deck of a party boat as we fished deep water rockfish on the Osborne Bank. It was a bright and sunny winter day with a huge dual direction swell that had my seasick meter in the red zone for the whole trip. But we were catching fish so I toughed it out; I'd puke for awhile and fish for awhile. I recall looking at the island just six miles away and praying for the respite of the calm in the lee.

Since that first time I've fished up there on countless other trips. We fish the winter and spring season for yellows, seabass and big halibut. We're usually

making our squid right there and then using it to bait the inshore gamesters. We've made great catches of all the species and both my personal best halibut and seabass have come from "The Rock."

Back in the "old days" we would often enjoy good albacore fishing in the basin between the West End of Catalina and SBI, in the deep water below the Osborne Bank and down outside the West End of San Clemente. Those elusive characters have bypassed us for many years now as they find their preferred conditions far north of our area. Hopefully they opt to return after this El Niño cycle. But in reality it's the summer and fall months during warm water years like this one that become the most interesting.

With the albies MIA, it's the yellowfin and bluefin that fill the gap in their absence. Last year, the beginning of this cycle brought some excellent fishing for a beautiful grade of yellowfin around the deep water below the 172 and down to the 499. We fished up there for stellar action on nice size fish with virtually no boat pressure. It was awesome.

This year the water setup is much different with much less yellowfin and far more bluefin. At this writing the break that held tonnage of tuna and then fell apart is now reforming. And guess what? As soon as the water structure redeveloped the bluefin reappeared. Not just the school-sized fish we normally encounter. I'm talking about spots of breaking fish of a grade that make you question your sanity and your gear as you're throwing a bait.

Another area holding the bigger bluefin has been the Osborne Bank as well as the ridge from the West

End of Catalina up to the 172. Some boats up there in late August did well on fish to 50 pounds.

But it's the marlin fishing around the various western banks, flats and ridges that can really steal the show. This year with the warm water the fish apparently came in from the outside bypassing the more traditional inner areas. To be sure, there are a few fish scattered from the 9 Mile Bank to up the beach to the Dana Point zone and also a few around the East End down to the 277. But the real meat is up west and some of the school is way out west, right up to the edge of the famed Santa Rosa Flats. We often say "The West is the Best" and this year it's true!

The end of August delivered some of the best marlin fishing of this young season. The boats in the tournaments did well with many multiples catches. The epicenter had moved a bit from around the 175 to open-water centered between the 17, the toe of the Boot and Harrison's Reef above Point Dume. It's kind of a no-man's land type of zone, but fish are where you find them and for whatever reason there is good volume in that sector.

Another zone where I've had some really good fishing is right in front of the anchorage in 50 to 60 fathoms. Some years the mackerel schools get thick in there and when the bait is there, guess what? The fish are often right there with them. But if you don't run your meter you'll never know if the bait is stacked up and drive right past the potential for some serious fun.

My all-time favorite spot to fish when up west is the Osborne Bank. For years it was best known for the killer cod fishing and full strings of big reds, groupers, cows and some giant lingcod. Sadly, those bottom-fishing days are done, but fortunately we are still able to target surface fish. Some years the big yellows stack up along with some whopper bluefin. We've caught them up to 100 pounds and the California state record of 363 pounds came from right on the bank.

But it's the marlin that are the main draw for me. Just like on the 50 fathom Flats to the east of the island



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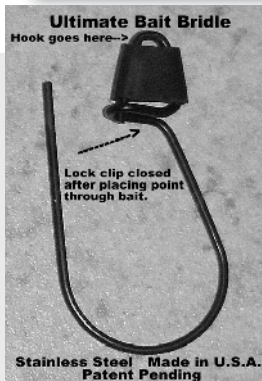
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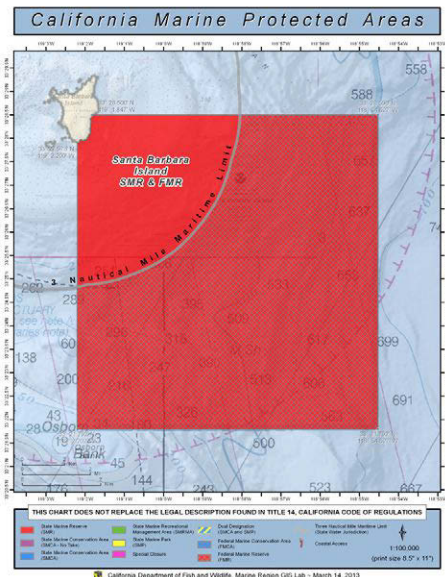
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when the bait stacks up on the bank those marlin are often right with it. In warm water years like '83 and '97 and what we are experiencing right now, the conditions often develop perfectly. Almost always if you tack right to the shallows then turn southeast and zigzag down a mile or so you'll know right away if the forage is there. And if it is ... then it's time to get to work. Some days the fish will get up in the jigs and bite the drop-backs and on other days it's all about drifting.

In addition to the distance and marginal weather conditions, there is another reason many fishermen now avoid the island. The package of specific closures in the Cowcod Conservation Area, which keeps us from bottom fishing deeper than 20 fathoms, currently includes Santa Barbara Islands. Additionally, the MLPA process touched SBI and we lost the whole southeast quadrant of the island forever. Fortunately the boundaries are just above the most productive areas on the bank and just below the bait grounds on the flats, but you must be aware of your location at all times. Enforcement in the area is rigorous so don't be tempted!

For more local knowledge, stop by to see Capt. Mark Wisch at the Pacific Edge store in Huntington Beach or visit www.PacificEdgeTackle.com. ■

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Image: Boy photographed fishing on Ghana's Lake Volta

BY **MIKE PONCE**
Fish Village Owner, Guide

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'Yak Attack



A HAPPY CLIENT WITH HIS FIRST YELLOWTAIL from a kayak (yes that is a kayak) out of Dana Point.

Guided Fishing It makes you a better angler

What do charters and guides all have in common? Experience, passion and the ability to teach anglers how to get better at their favorite pastime. At the end of the day, there isn't much of a fundamental difference between a charter boat captain and a fishing guide; either takes you fishing and teaches you techniques and tricks of the trade that make you a better angler.

A charter boat captain operating out of San Diego will have a different set of skills and expertise that perhaps a river fly fishing guide doesn't have, however that doesn't lessen the value of the river fly fishing guide. Each "guide" is an encyclopedia of knowledge specific to their area of practice, which makes every guide an indispensable asset that every angler should take advantage of from time to time.

There are many good reasons to hire a guide, but most can be lumped into a few categories: Learn new fishing grounds, learn a new technique or skill and what many seem to think is the only reason ... learn how to catch a target

species. The funny thing is that if you want to learn how to catch yellowtail in La Jolla, one must also know how to rig for them and where to find them. As an ocean-based kayak fishing guide, I have been asked to take people out with absolutely no expectation to catch fish, but instead simply mark up their GPS with waypoints so that they know where to fish and what to expect at each spot. I have also been asked to target halibut or calico bass while others have asked to simply go

A GRUMPY CALICO BASS picked from one of Fish Village's secret spots in Dana Point.



kayak fishing looking for that cool new experience. To me ... these are all great reasons to hire a guide because every experience will make you a better angler whether it be your first time or 100th day on the water.

When fishing on a chartered boat, the captain is the guide and in some cases, depending on the size of the boat, the captain may also be the entire crew. The same goes for kayak fishing. A kayak angler is the sole individual responsible for your fishing experience and safety. This line of thinking lends itself well to the idea that hiring a guide will not only help you catch fish, but help you remain safe on future outings. Safety is paramount. What good is catching a fish of a lifetime if you never make it home to share the story?

Learning new fishing grounds can be a daunting challenge, especially when you are fishing in the mighty blue ocean, which often seems lifeless and desolate. Kayak anglers have a limited range when compared to boaters simply because it takes us longer to move from spot to spot without the assistance of a motor. A guide can help you sift through barren sections of ocean and find the honey holes that will produce that trophy fish, help you win a tournament or land your next dinner.

Sometimes the issue isn't finding the honey hole, but when to fish it. Calico bass fishermen come to expect that if they find kelp, they will find bass. It is true that the kelp often holds bass, but does that mean that you can convince them to bite? Conditions often dictate when fish feed or when fish are likely to slam your favorite artificial swimbait. There is nothing more frustrating than finding fish and seeing them with your own eyes, only to float away empty-handed.

A contrasting example of leveraging a guide's skill set and knowledge base would be to learn a brand new technique such as fly fishing for trout or bottom fishing for halibut. It is common to encounter a new technique when targeting a specific species of fish. When bottom fishing for halibut you first learn how to set up a halibut rig and then how to scrape the bottom with your bait to entice a strike. A guide also knows that halibut



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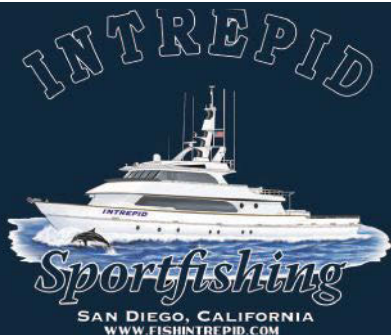
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Sat Oct 17	Sun Nov 1	15	\$5395	24	Catchy Tackle / Open
Mon Nov 2	Thu Nov 12	10	\$3895	26	Larry Brown and 20 Different Sponsors / Open
Thu Nov 12	Wed Nov 25	13	\$4995	24	Hoo's Tuna Run and Gun / Phil Hein / Open
Fri Nov 27	Mon Dec 7	10	\$3895	26	Avet Reels / Bluefin Jim@yahoo.com / Open
Tue Dec 8	Tue Dec 22	14	\$4895	24	Dave Berutich / Larry Brown / Open
Sat Dec 26	Sat Jan 9	14	\$4795	24	Izorline / Open
Sat Jan 9	Sat Jan 23	14	\$5695	22	Westcoastfishing / Open / Limited Load
Sun Jan 24	Mon Feb 8	15	\$5395	24	Soft Steel / Okuma / Open
Wed Feb 10	Thur Feb 25	15	Call	sold out	Private Charter
Sat Feb 27	Tue Mar 15	17	\$6995	20	Catchy Tackle / Open / Limited Load
Sat Mar 19	Sun Apr 3	15	\$5395	24	Soft Steel / Okuma / Open
Sat Jun 11	Fri Jun 17	6	\$2175	26	JRI Custom Lures / Open
Fri Jun 17	Sat Jun 25	8	\$2795	sold out	Jims Custom Rods / Open
Sat Jun 25	Fri Jul 1	6	\$2375	26	Avet Reels / Open
Fri Jul 1	Mon Jul 4	3	\$1450	26	4th of July / Open
Mon Jul 4	Sat Jul 9	5	\$2370	26	Baja Fish Gear / Open
Sat Jul 9	Sun Jul 17	8	\$3535	26	Ray Jarvis Memorial Charter
Sun Jul 17	Sat Jul 23	6	\$2975	25	Anglers Choice / Open

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love sandy bottoms and how to find them. Spending time on learning new techniques pays huge dividends in the long run. Over the years you will learn hundreds of tactics, various knots and multiple tricks of the trade that will make you a better fisherman.

So often we hear of anglers hiring guides to target a specific fish, no different than when hunters hire a guide to find that massive buck. Kayakers on the West Coast dream of catching large pelagic fish whether it be for the sheer pleasure, bragging rights or a picture of a lifetime. The problem is that not all fish are created equal. Yes, some may enjoy eating the same live bait or hiding in the same habitat, but getting them to bite could vary from species to species and often does.

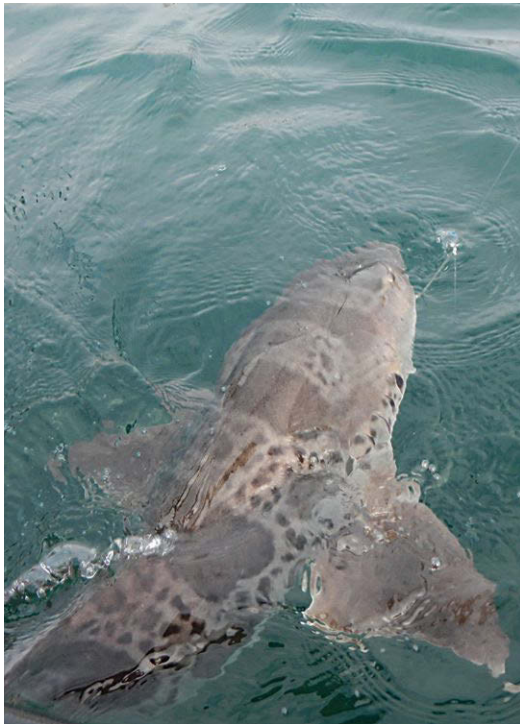
A California favorite is the yellowtail and to catch one takes skill, a lot of knowledge and a little bit of luck. SoCal kayak fishing guides have their own unique tactics for attracting, catching and landing yellowtail. In La Jolla, most guides will slow troll a greenback or Spanish mackerel just outside the kelp line while anglers up the coast will sight cast surface irons at kelp paddies to attract the fan favorite mossback. The methods used to catch your target species are often location specific and derived from the guide's experience and success ratios.

Whether you recognize it or not, a guide will teach you where to find your target species, how to rig for it and how to attract it. Finding the fish is one thing, getting them on the end of your line is another, but landing them takes your fish story from fiction to fact. Nothing tells a better story than

A MIXED BAG OF COLOR

COMBOS for different conditions ... only a guide can sort out this mess.





NEVER CAUGHT A SHARK ON A KAYAK? You might want to consider having a guide show you how to properly and safely handle a shark—for both you and the shark.

a fish on deck. In a sense, your guide has made the mistakes for you in the past so that you don't have to. That translates into a higher percentage of successfully landed fish and who doesn't want that?

As every-day anglers we cannot be at two places at once, we cannot fish 100 square miles a day, nor can we spend enough time on the water fast enough to become a pro, hence why it behooves any kayak angler young, new or experienced to hire a kayak fishing guide to help you accelerate your learning curve.

Local kayak fishing guides range from \$165-\$250 depending on length of day, kayak and gear rental plus bait. Consider the expense a minor investment into your own fishing career. When you pay for a trip on a chartered boat, you are paying for the same experience. Your guide is your captain who takes the helm to find you fish, help you catch and ultimately land them. A fishing guide is simply a more personal experience that gets you one on one with the expert, which often translates to success.

Need help finding a fishing guide? Visit Fish Village at fishvillage.com. ■

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Outrageous: The Boston Whaler 420 Outrage!



With an ocean alive with angling exotics and travel options, could there be a better time to exit the harbor in the biggest and best from Boston Whaler—the 420 Outrage? You know there isn't!

This sexy beast is loaded with all the newest features and amenities available, designed to make you comfortable while keeping you safe at sea, whether you're fishing far offshore, entertaining friends or family out at the islands or in the bay. The 420 Outrage drives like a dream and features a long list of highlights for the most discerning captain.

Having made its debut at the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show this past fall, the 420 is the largest and most advanced Whaler model to date. Clearly the manufacturer has outdone itself.

Said company President Huw Bower, "The 420 Outrage marks a new chapter in the Boston Whaler legend. The level of sophistication,

comfort, performance and capability is unparalleled—truly, this is a boat like no other." Better than that, you can now see one by checking in at suncountrymarine.com, here on the Left Coast.

Step aboard and you'll see almost immediately the classy and spacious nature of this craft. The 420 Outrage is designed to encourage onboard entertaining, with thoughtful social zones throughout the boat and amenities for a wide range of activities.

They are not kidding when they say every square inch takes into account boaters' comfort and convenience. Take for example, the expansive bow area, with clever backrest configurations that provide 360-degree seating around the large, removable bow table.

During our extended summers here in Southern California, a nice trip over to Catalina for the weekend with the family will be a in total comfort. Imagine yourself running across the channel with the 420's well-equipped galley and gracious head, your needs more than taken care of.

And because the entire cabin is flooded with natural light, thanks to eye-level porthole windows and seven feet of headroom, you'll never feel cramped. The creature comforts virtually turn the weekend into a four-star vacation.

An available sunshade easily deploys over the area, providing welcome protection from the sun even when anchored far

from shore. This Boston Whaler also features another sunshade that extends aft beyond the hardtop to shelter passengers in the cockpit.

The helm area of the 420 is spectacular in its ability to accommodate up to six passengers while under way, all facing forward, standing or sitting. An actuated captain's seat and dual forward-or-backward facing companion seating are accompanied by an entire second row: a conversion bench that flips to face forward, or aft for when the main action is in the rear cockpit.

When you come to the wheel you will need to feast your eyes on the truly *outrageous* helm station. This is a glimpse directly into the future! Three state-of-the-art Raymarine GS screens sit flush behind an uninterrupted glass surface, offering what they're calling an "intuitive," synchronized command experience. Here you can



control multiple functions with a single touch, with Mastervolt's advanced CZone Digital Switching technology.

You may have thought you knew center consoles, but the 420 Outrage will not be constrained. Here you will find remarkable and powerful offshore performance, but in a luxury body. Hard to argue with Jeff Vaughn, Boston Whaler vice president of sales, marketing and customer service: "There is literally nothing else like it on the marketplace."

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And just how powerful, you may ask? The big Outrage comes with Quad 300-hp Mercury Verado engines that feature Shadow Mode Technology and Joystick Piloting, delivering strong, efficient power, precise maneuverability and effortless docking. There is nobody in the harbor who can match that!

But remember, for all those horses, this is a Whaler. Boston Whaler's legendary construction guarantees a stable, dry ride in any conditions—whether the desire to brave big water is an every-weekend reality or a bucket-list item. The center console design affords easy 360-degree walkaround, with high sidewalls for added safety and peace of mind. Dang.

And just in time for El Nino, because it's an Outrage, boaters can count on

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www.bostonwhaler.com

SPECIFICATIONS

L.O.A.: 42' 6" (13.0 m)

Beam: 13' (3.96 m)

Draft: 31" (0.79 m)

Weight (dry, no engine):

22,000 lbs (9,979 kg)

**Weight (with engines, fuel
and water):** 24,800 lbs (11,249 kg)

Maximum Weight Capacity:

7,482 lbs (3,394 kg)

Swamped Capacity: 4,000 lbs
(1,814 kg)

Maximum Persons Capacity: 20

Maximum Horsepower:

1,675 hp (1,249 kW)

Minimum Horsepower:

1,200 hp (895 kW)

Maximum Engine Weight:

3,400 lbs (1,542 kg)

Transom Height: 30" (0.76 m)

Transom Angle: 15°

Deadrise at Transom: 22°

Fuel Capacity: 600 gallons (2,271 L)

Waste Capacity: 20 gallons (76 L)

Water Capacity: 60 gallons (227 L)

Bridge Clearance with Hardtop:

12' 5" (3.81 m)

Bridge Clearance with Hardtop

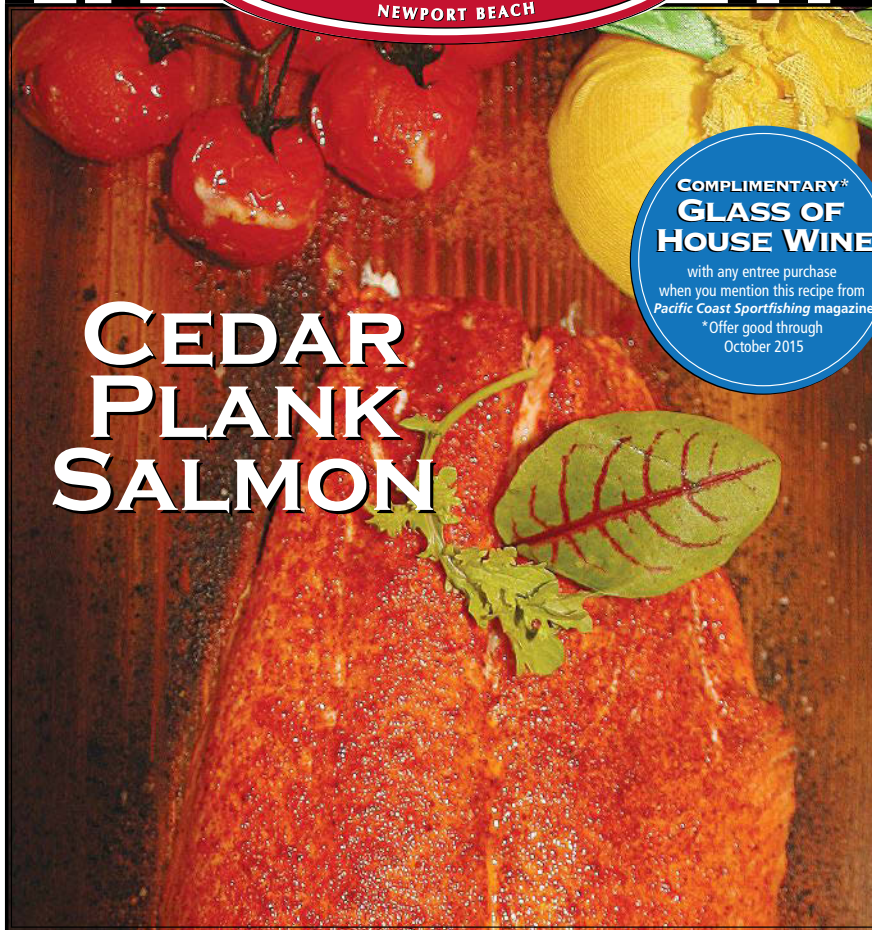
and Satellite TV: 14' 2" (4.32 m)

Bridge Clearance with Upper

Station: 18' 6" (5.64 m)

*Specified measurements are approxi-
mations and subject to variance. ■*

PACIFIC PALATE



CEDAR PLANK SALMON

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INGREDIENTS:

**1 CEDAR PLANK
1 (2-POUND) SALMON FILET
OLIVE OIL**

SALMON RUB

**1/2 CUP FIRMLY PACKED LIGHT BROWN SUGAR
1/4 CUP KOSHER SALT
2 TABLESPOONS PAPRIKA
2 TABLESPOONS CHILI POWDER
1 TABLESPOON GROUND CORIANDER
2 TEASPOONS GARLIC POWDER
1 TEASPOON CELERY SEEDS**

**1 TEASPOON COARSELY GROUND BLACK PEPPER
COMBINE ALL INGREDIENTS, STORE IN AN AIRTIGHT CONTAINER.
MAKES ABOUT 1 1/2 CUPS.**

Soak cedar plank in water for at least 1 hour. Remove pin bones from salmon, and brush with olive oil. Generously spread salmon with the rub. Cover and chill until ready to grill. Drain plank and place on a medium hot grill for 3 minutes or until grill marks appear. Remove from grill. Place salmon, skin side down, on heated side. Place plank on grill and cover. Grill for 20 minutes or until desired degree of doneness. Check occasionally to make sure edges of pink do not ignite. Serve with your favorite side dish.

Serves six.

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BY TODD LAWRENCE



GENE LAWRENCE Scores Big!

Dad Makes *First String, Scores!*

In August, my dad Gene Lawrence and I had been keeping an eye on the local bluefin counts and noticed they kept getting better and better. Dad also noticed the upcoming full moon and knew the bigger models bite during the moon phase. He said we needed to jump on an overnight soon and gave his favorite boat a call, the *First String* with Captain Brad Phillips.

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"... Dad enjoys waking up and being right on top of the fishing grounds."

Luckily, they had a couple of spots open three days after the full moon, and Dad pulled the trigger. He loves the *First String*. It's a very comfortable and roomy boat with great service and a professional crew. The boat is an incredible fishing platform with a 25-foot beam, four large bait tanks and an RSW fish hold to keep your catch pristine.

Dad enjoys waking up and being right on top of the fishing grounds. I could tell he was fired up and ready for action after a good night's rest and hardy breakfast. The tunas started biting later in morning when dad noticed a tern working off behind the boat. He grabbed a hot 'dine and fired it right underneath the tern. Seconds later he's on!

The fish took him around the boat several times and I thought he was going to lose several times because he was fighting it on 30-pound line, but dad put the wood to him and 25 minutes later the fish was at gaff. He had scored a nice 40-pound bluefin.

Not bad for being 78 years young! dad, I enjoyed sharing the rail with you and look forward to doing it again soon. Thanks Pops.

*Thank you PCS magazine,
Todd Lawrence ■*

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new on deck

BATSON ENTERPRISES / Rainshadow Rods



Batson Enterprises offers a three-rod solution for multi-day trips. Built using a composite of RX6 Graphite and E Glass, these Rainshadow rod blanks have the backbone to put the hurt on fish, while maintaining an action that doesn't beat up the angler. The 7-foot, 9-inch RCLB 79ML rod is rated for 20- to 40-pound test but is best suited for fishing 25-30-pound. It's matched with a small, two-speed, lever-drag reel full of 50-pound spectra and a top shot of 30-pound fluorocarbon this is the perfect set up for fly-lining baits for yellowtail or school sized tuna. The 8-foot, 10-inch RCLB 810M rod does double duty for surface iron and heavier live bait. You'll want to match it with a medium sized star drag reel, like a Penn Fathom 25N or a Trinidad 16A full of 65-pound spectra and a 40- to 50-pound fluorocarbon top shot. This rod is well suited to throw jigs like a Tady 45 or Salas 7X for big yellows. The 7-foot, heavy action RCJB 84H rod is perfect for yo-yo fishing or any of your heavy bait fishing needs. When matched with a Penn Fathom 40N 2-speed reel full of 80-pound spectra and a top shot of 60-pound fluorocarbon, this rod transitions seamlessly between jig stick and heavy dropper loop rod.

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new on deck

GRUNDÉNS USA / Gage Midway Softshell Kryptek Camo

Ideal for every-day wear or serious fishing, Grundéns USA Gage Midway Softshell jackets has added two bold new Kryptek camouflage patterns with comfortable, mid-weight protection: Highlander and the unique dark Typhon. Fishermen will find either look suits their favorite activity and personal sense of style. Wind-proof, water-resistant, four-way-stretch fabric keeps wearers warm and comfortable, while providing superior freedom of movement. Grundéns' proven adjustable Halo hood system provides complete coverage



while optimizing movement and visibility. Water-resistant reverse coil zippers throughout and Velcro adjustable cuffs help keep out the cold and wind. For gear storage and added versatility, the Midway Softshell features two side-zip hand warmer pockets, an exterior Napoleon pocket, an interior chest pocket and interior mesh stuff pockets. The Midway Softshell is offered in XS to 5XL, fitting men and women of all shapes and sizes.

Learn more at (800) 323-7327 or grundens.com

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For those curious to find out what lies below the ocean's glassy surface, the Luma-Vu Underwater Camera from Aqualuma will take you there. The Luma-Vu Camera gives you a crystal clear view of what's happening in the ocean beneath you. Simply flick the switch and a kaleidoscope of color will be revealed. The Luma-Vu Underwater Camera continues Aqualuma's



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commitment to enhancing your boating experience. Manufactured with Aqualuma's famous corrosion-proof, injection-moulded polymer housing, this high resolution color CCTV camera is virtually bullet proof (and definitely shark proof!). Luma-Vu will connect to any video input.

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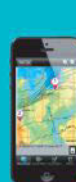
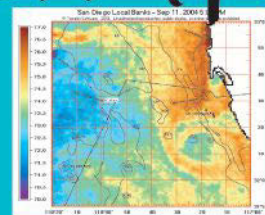
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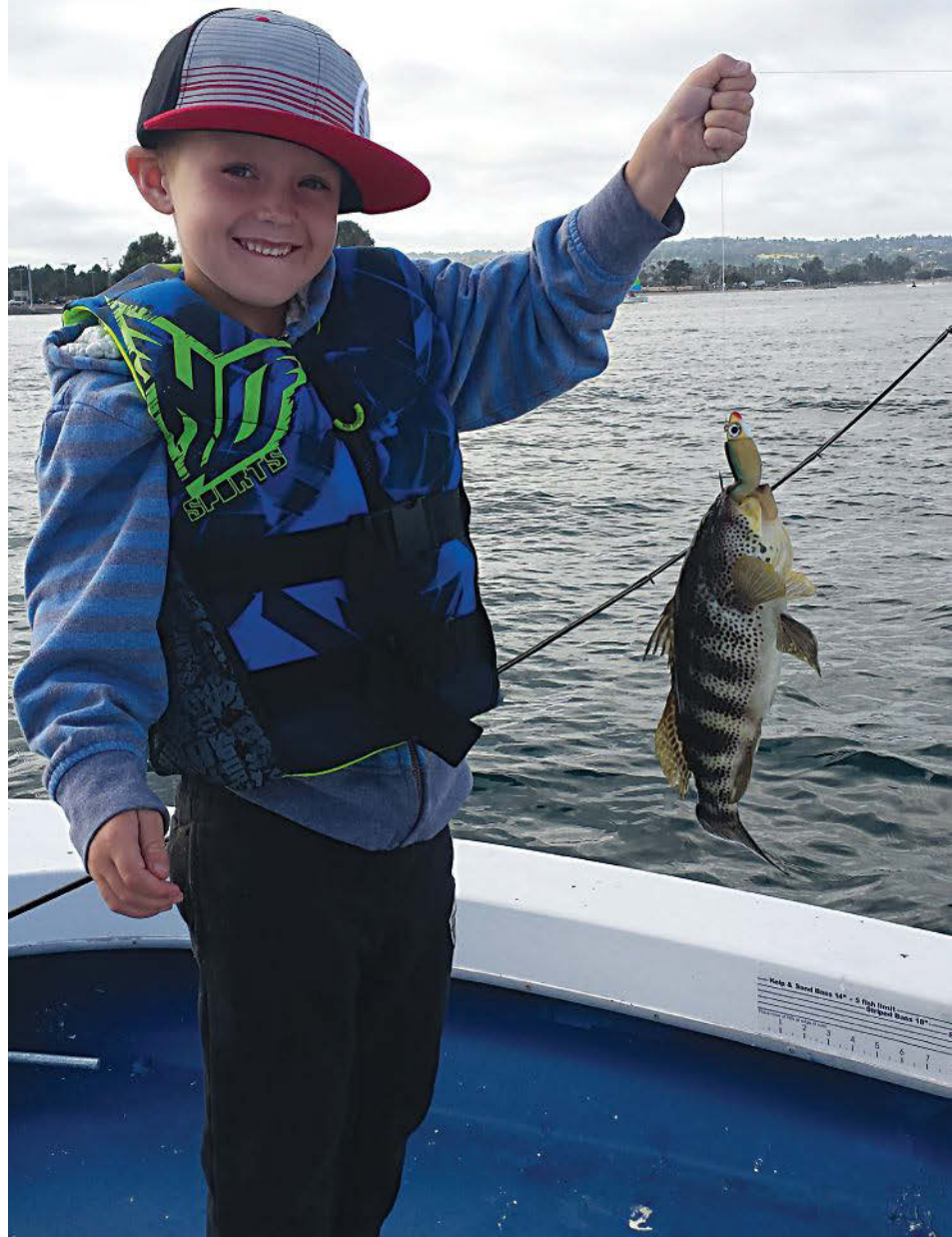
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Kids Catch

SeaWorld Success



Young Hudson Burns proudly displays a fat spotted bay bass, taken across from the SeaWorld Marina in Mission Bay. The fish came during some excellent father-son time with dad Kyle and bit on a Big Hammer swimbait on a cloudy July morning. ■

**Take your kids fishing?
You should!**

When you do, capture the memories and send them to our Copy Editor, GKramer@PCSportfishing.com and we'll share them with the PCS family.

TIDES & TIMES OCTOBER

TIPS FROM THE ADVISORY PANEL: General Rules: (1) The best fishing times are one hour before and after the Hi and Lo slack tides. Fish generally feed more heavily during these times. (2) The degree of water movement also influences most fish feeding habits. Usually, the greater the degree of movement, the more aggressive the feeding. (3) Most agree that the best time to fish is between the new and full moon phase.

DAY	HIGH	FT	LOW	FT	HIGH	FT	LOW	FT	HIGH	FT	SUNRISE	SUNSET
1	12:10 AM	4.7	5:40 AM	1.5	11:56 AM	6.1	6:54 PM	0.1			6:47 AM	6:37 PM
2	1:17 AM	4.2	6:28 AM	2.1	12:48 PM	5.7	8:04 PM	0.4				
3	2:45 AM	3.8	7:31 AM	2.6	1:52 PM	5.3	9:27 PM	0.6				
4	4:30 AM	3.8	9:07 AM	2.9	3:15 PM	4.9	10:50 PM	0.6				
5	5:54 AM	4.1	10:55 AM	2.8	4:44 PM	4.8	11:57 PM	0.5				
6	6:48 AM	4.4	12:11 PM	2.5	5:57 PM	4.9						
7			12:48 AM	0.5	7:26 AM	4.7	1:04 PM	2.1	6:52 PM	5.0		
8			1:27 AM	0.5	7:55 AM	4.9	1:44 PM	1.7	7:37 PM	5.0		
9			2:00 AM	0.6	8:20 AM	5.1	2:18 PM	1.3	8:15 PM	5.1		
10			2:27 AM	0.7	8:42 AM	5.3	2:49 PM	1.0	8:49 PM	5.0		
11			2:52 AM	0.8	9:04 AM	5.4	3:19 PM	0.7	9:21 PM	4.9		
12			3:15 AM	1.0	9:26 AM	5.5	3:49 PM	0.6	9:54 PM	4.8		
13			3:39 AM	1.3	9:48 AM	5.6	4:20 PM	0.5	10:28 PM	4.5		
14			4:02 AM	1.5	10:12 AM	5.6	4:53 PM	0.5	11:04 PM	4.3		
15			4:26 AM	1.8	10:38 AM	5.5	5:30 PM	0.5	11:45 PM	4.0		
16			4:51 AM	2.1	11:07 AM	5.4	6:13 PM	0.7			6:58 AM	6:18 PM
17	12:36 AM	3.7	5:19 AM	2.5	11:40 AM	5.2	7:05 PM	0.8				
18	1:46 AM	3.4	5:54 AM	2.8	12:24 PM	5.0	8:11 PM	0.9				
19	3:28 AM	3.4	6:59 AM	3.1	1:28 PM	4.7	9:29 PM	0.9				
20	5:01 AM	3.7	9:08 AM	3.2	3:01 PM	4.5	10:42 PM	0.8				
21	5:51 AM	4.1	10:57 AM	2.8	4:36 PM	4.6	11:40 PM	0.6				
22	6:27 AM	4.6	12:06 PM	2.2	5:51 PM	4.8						
23			12:28 AM	0.4	7:01 AM	5.1	12:58 PM	1.4	6:52 PM	5.1		
24			1:11 AM	0.3	7:34 AM	5.6	1:46 PM	0.6	7:47 PM	5.3		
25			1:51 AM	0.3	8:09 AM	6.1	2:31 PM	-0.1	8:38 PM	5.4		
26			2:30 AM	0.4	8:44 AM	6.5	3:17 PM	-0.6	9:27 PM	5.3		
27			3:09 AM	0.7	9:21 AM	6.8	4:03 PM	-0.9	10:18 PM	5.1		
28			3:48 AM	1.0	10:01 AM	6.8	4:51 PM	-0.9	11:10 PM	4.8		
29			4:29 AM	1.5	10:41 AM	6.6	5:41 PM	-0.8				
30	12:07 AM	4.4	5:12 AM	1.9	11:25 AM	6.2	6:36 PM	-0.4				
31	1:13 AM	4.1	6:02 AM	2.4	12:13 PM	5.7	7:37 PM	0			7:11 AM	6:01 PM

ADJUSTMENTS: To find the times of high and low water for the area you plan to fish, add or subtract the number of minutes shown below to the times on the chart. Water levels vary as well, although only slightly in Southern California. In the Bay Area, variation is much greater, but the chart should still give you good idea of the days with the greatest tidal ranges.

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+22	+1:15
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+24	Crescent City
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Monterey	
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LOS ANGELES TO MANZINILLO, MEXICO

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What's Happening...
When... Where...

October 3 ...First day of recreational and commercial spiny lobster season. Additional information go to dfg.ca.gov.



October 21-23 ...Black & Blue Tournament Anglers from around the world return to Los Cabos for a chance at fame and the largest payouts for the largest black and blue marlin. Oct. 20: registration and distribution of team bags in front of Puerto Paraiso Mall, 2-6 p.m.; captains meeting (one team member must attend), 6-7 p.m. at Puerto Paraiso Mall; opening ceremonies that include flag honors with Mexican Naval escort, Mexican national anthem, pre-Colombian new fire dance, lighting of the tournament torch, Japanese Taiko drums and music by Cabomax, 7-9 p.m. Oct. 21-23: fishing days with shotgun start, 8 a.m.; tournament fishing until 5 p.m. (when lines must be out of the water); weigh station open in front of Puerto Paraiso Mall, 2-9 p.m. (boats inside the harbor entrance by 9 p.m. can weigh.) Oct. 24: Awards Celebration 7-8:30 p.m.

November 4-7 ...WON/Yamaha 16th annual Los Cabos Tuna Jackpot Team entry fee is \$1,000 with 85 percent payout to the champs, 10 percent to second place and 5 percent for third. All tuna and wahoo/dorado optionals remain in place. Send a check (made out to Western Outdoors) to Cabo Tuna Jackpot, Western Outdoors Publications, 901 Calle Amanecer, Suite 300, San Clemente, CA 92672 with team number request.

November 17-20 ...Los Cabos Charter Boat Classic The Los Cabos Big Game Charter Boat Classic is a FREE angler/participant entry tournament for all participants fishing on a Los Cabos charter boat Nov. 17, 18, 19 or 20, 2015. The tournament is offering a guaranteed \$40,000 in cash purse plus prizes. loscabostournaments.com/los-cabos-charter-boat-classic-rules-2015

January 13-17 ...Portland Boat Show See the latest sailboats, sportboats, fishing boats, personal watercraft and boating accessories at the 56th annual Portland Boat Show at Portland Expo Center. Find an outstanding selection of boats, shop and compare dozens of brands, lines and styles at the Portland Boat Show, it is the place to be this January. Call: 503-246-8291 or 800-343-6973. otshows.com/pbs/

February 19-21 ...7th annual Pacific Coast Sportfishing Festival & Boat Show at the Orange County Fair and Events Center. Saltwater fishing, tackle and travel exhibitors. Sixth annual event also features seminars, door prizes, cool fishing boats and fun for the entire family. For more details, go to www.sportfishingfestival.com.

February 25-28 ...Los Angeles Boat Show Los Angeles Convention Center, South Hall 1201 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles. Show hours: Convention Center: noon-9 p.m. Thurs.-Fri., noon-9 p.m. Sat. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sun. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Marina del Rey: Thurs. & Fri.: Noon-5 p.m. Admission: adults (16 and older): \$12 children (15 and under): FREE - Must be accompanied by an adult. Military personnel: FREE with I.D. Box office only accepts cash. Pre-qualify for Boat Loan with Southeast Financial. losangelesboatshow.com.

March 2-6 ...Fred Hall Long Beach Show Take advantage of all the great deals on tackle, boats and vacations as well as hundreds of seminars at this annual event. Kids 15 and under get in free with a paid adult. At the Long Beach Convention Center. For more information, go to fredhall.com.

Want information about your club or organization's activities published in PCS?

Send information at least 60 days prior to event to: "Events Calendar" Pacific Coast Sportfishing, 240 Newport Center Drive, Ste 205, Newport Beach, CA 92660
Fax: 949-650-3459 or email Bill@PCSportfishing.com.

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Please Tell Them You Saw It In *Pacific Coast Sportfishing*

looking astern

BY ED RIES 1919-2011

Old Times Glossary

In conversation with my younger friends I am aware that much of the fishing lingo used in the Old Days is no longer current. Terminology and slang have changed, along with just about everything else connected with the sport. Perhaps it would be well to record a few bits of it before it is lost beyond recall. Below is a very brief and random list of terms seldom heard today.

Bakelite: The first synthetic resin plastic, invented in 1909. Black or brown in color, it was widely used for sideplates, replacing the hard rubber found on quality reels since the turn of the century. It was very brittle.

Blue cod: Cabezon.

Blue streak: Large, lively anchovy, a good hook bait.

Bohunk: The largest size sardine, over 10 inches.

Chinese or Japanese croaker: Names once applied by pier fishermen to the sargo (*Anisotremus davidsoni*), a member of the grunt family.

Counter: Legal sized, commercially marketable fish. In the Old Days there were no size limits on sport-caught fish.

Cuttyhunk: Generic name for cable-laid linen fish line.

Darb: Slang superlative for fish of exceptional size or beauty. Sometimes applied to human females. Same as a "mogen."

Ding-ding: A device attached to a pole or rope that was plunged up and down from the stern of a bait boat to frighten surrounded fish towards the center of the net. Until the wings of the net were aboard, an escape route under the boat was open. Sometimes called a scarecrow, or just plain scare.

Feather Merchants: Term applied to fishermen who specialized in casting small feather jigs for barracuda.

Feeler: Handline used for rockfishing in deep water. Often buoyed off to mark a hotspot of biting fish.

Fluke: Slang name for halibut.

German silver: Nickel-zinc alloy used to plate exposed reel parts that are now anodized or chromed.

Grumpy: Any rockfish. Now most often applied to bull sand bass.

Herring: Queenfish, *Seriphus politus*, now called brown bait.

Knuckle-buster: A fishing reel without a mechanical braking mechanism.

Individual: Small kelp or sand bass ten to twelve inches long. Sold in restaurants as "individual rock bass".

Laguna Tuna: Derisive term for bonito or mackerel.

Lampara: Type of hand-pulled, round-haul net used to catch live bait or any small market fish.

Live bait boat: The generic name for sportfishing vessels carrying quantities of live bait, usually anchovies or sardines, for use as chum and hook bait. Although live bait was first carried for commercial albacore fishing from about 1911, sport boats were not equipped for it until about 1920.

Monterey: Generic name for the clipper-bowed, double-ended hook-and-line market fishing boats found in every California port between the world wars. Descendants of a sail-powered design introduced by Italian immigrants. Built

in large numbers at Monterey boatyards. Usually crewed by one to three fishermen. Not many of these seaworthy classics survive today.

Norwegian steam: Energy for hauling anchors, ropes, or other devices by manpower alone.

Pinback: Spiny dogfish, *Squalus acanthis*. Once sought by setline fishermen for their livers. Now the object of renewed interest by the fish-and-chips trade.

Plunger: Sportboat passenger of limited fishing skill and a predilection for digging in the bait tank.

Preo: Percentage, or extra money above wages derived from tips or sale of fish by boat crews.

Rope gaff: Used by pier and barge fishermen to haul up fish too large to bounce. A large treble hook imbedded in a lead weight attached to a rope.

Scarecrow: See ding-ding.

Scoop boat: Vessel engaged in mackerel fishing with hand-held dip nets.

Scooter: Barracuda.

Sea trout: Young, white sea bass, once caught in large numbers from the numerous piers along the coast, especially at night.

Setline: Long horizontal line supporting several hundred hooks on short leaders, anchored and buoyed at the ends. Widely used for halibut and bottom fish in the Old Days, but rarely seen now. Newport Beach dory fishermen still work this gear.

Sidewinder: Simplest and cheapest form of wooden or metal single action reel, common for pier fishing.

Slimey: Slang term for bocaccio or salmon grouper, *Sebastes paucispinis*.

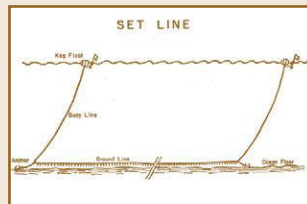
Snobble: Slang verb meaning to make a good catch.

Stovepipe: Large barracuda.

Striker: Weighted barbless hook dressed with feathers used in commercial pole fishing for tuna, bonito, mackerel and barracuda. Now more commonly and confusingly called a "squad."

Uphill or downhill: In the seagoing context, traveling against the wind and waves or with them.

Water haul: Unproductive set with a bait net. Often the result of a "blind haul" when the net was set without a surface indication of bait fish.





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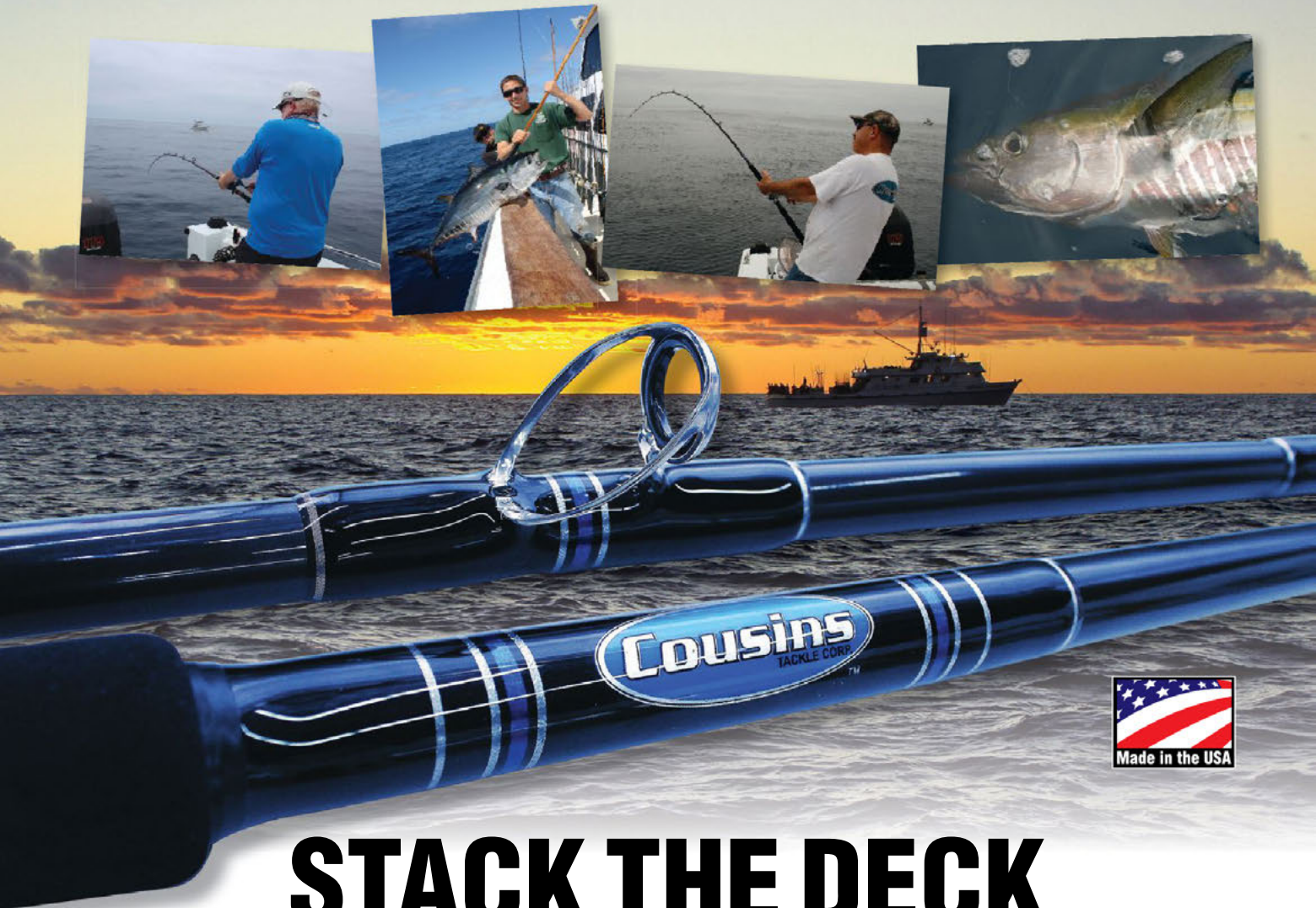
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